George Grenville Academy

Pupil Attendance Policy

Approved by: L. Berry		**Date:** 09 July 2025	
Next review due by:	July 2027		

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1. Intent

At George Grenville Academy we nurture every child to fulfil their whole potential. Regular attendance at school is the best way we can ensure the children have full access to our curriculum and therefore have every opportunity to fulfil their whole potential.

The purpose of this policy is to promote good attendance through:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils, including nursery children
- Explaining what is good attendance and why it matters
- Outlining the processes we follow to ensure attendance is good
- Detailing the steps we take when a child's attendance is a cause for concern
- Explaining how we monitor attendance

2. Why good attendance matters

At George Grenville, we are committed to delivering the highest quality education for all pupils. We strive to create an environment where every child feels safe, valued, and welcomed.

High attendance is vital for children to fully benefit from the educational opportunities we offer. We encourage every pupil to aim for **100% attendance**—being in school, on time, every day it is open (typically 190 days per year), unless absence is genuinely unavoidable.

Regular attendance helps children build strong relationships with peers and staff, feel a sense of belonging, and learn our progressive, sequential curriculum. The habits of good attendance and punctuality mirror the expectations of future employers and are essential for academic success, social confidence, and long-term aspirations.

We understand that there will be occasions when a child is genuinely too unwell to attend school. However, we encourage all parents to send their child to school whenever possible. If a parent is unsure whether their child is well enough to attend, we ask that they send their child in, assured that the school will contact them promptly if the child appears too unwell during the school day.

At George Grenville we consider attendance below 95% to be a cause for concern and attendance below 90% as persistent absenteeism.

Below is a table which illustrates how much learning is lost with attendance of 95% or below:

Attendance	Weeks Missed	Days Missed	Hours of School Missed
95%	2 weeks	10 days	68 hours
90%	4 Weeks	20 days	136 hours
85%	6 Weeks	30 days	204 hours
80%	8 Weeks	40 days	272 hours

3. Policy Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

4. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The School Improvement Director (Campfire Education Trust)

The school improvement director is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
    - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Executive Headteacher and Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

5.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy in school and sharing the full document on the website and the condensed 'At a glance' version through parentmail and school communications. (Appendix 3)
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels
- Monitoring school-level absence and punctuality data and reporting it to governors and the Campfire Education Trust

- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance and punctuality of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the school's Attendance Officer to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

5.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer (with support from the Head of School) is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Monitoring and analysing attendance and punctuality data across the school and at an individual pupil level to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Provding regular attendance reports to school staff and reports concerns about attendance and punctuality to the Head of School
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaises with the SENDCO, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), education welfare officers and other external agencies to promote good attendance and tackle persistent absence and lateness
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Advises the Head of School when the criteria for a fixed-penalty notice are met

5.4 Class teachers

Class teachers

- Ensure the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Create a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Ensure the register is taken at the start of the morning and afternoon session, using the correct codes (See Appendix 1) and submitting this information to the school office, promptly.
- Emphasise with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.

- Alert the Attendance Officer to any patterns of absence or lateness and/or any concerns relating to absence

5.5 School office staff

School office staff are expected to:

- Take calls from parents about absence and punctuality and record it, accurately, on the school system
- Signpost parents/carers to the Attendance Officer, where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

5.6 Parents and Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is the most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents and carers have a legal obligation to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school and receive a full-time education (Education Act, 1996). Failure to do can lead to prosecution and fines.

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Ensure their child arrives on time for registration
- Provide the school with **more than 1** emergency contact number for their child
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Register their child at the main office if they are late (arriving after the gates have closed in the morning at 8:45 am) or when leaving the school site during school hours
- Support the school by encouraging their child to aim for 100% attendance
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or the local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Attendance Officer

5.6 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day, on time.

6. Recording attendance

6.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

We will also record:

- [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:45am and ends at 3:15pm.

Registration for the first (morning) session begins at 8.30am and all pupils are expected to be in school by 8:45 am, which is when the classroom doors and school gates close.

The register for the second (afternoon) session is taken at 1:15pm and kept open until 1:20 pm.

6.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45 am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). This can be done by emailing (office@georgegrenville.co.uk) or ringing the school office on **01280 813273** .

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

The parent/carer must continue to notify the school on each subsequent day of absence.

6.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This can be done by emailing or phoning the school office.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to **section 7.1** to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

6.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is important for children to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions. Learning begins as soon as the children enter the classroom. Teachers set early morning work, which is a valuable opportunity to practise skills, consolidate learning and prepare for the day ahead. Adults also use this time to run intervention sessions providing individuals and/or groups of children with additional support to help them keep up with their peers and access the learning within lessons more effectively.

The start of the morning and afternoon sessions is also a time when teachers talk through the timetable for the day, highlight any changes and deliver important messages. If children are late, they will miss this vital information as well as valuable learning. Late arrival can be highly disruptive—not only for the child arriving late but also for their peers—and may contribute to further absence.

Registration begins at 8:35 am and all pupils are expected to be in school by 8:45am. which is when the external classroom doors and school gates close.

All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

Children arriving after 8:45 am will be marked as late (Attendance Code 'L')

Children arriving after 9:10am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session (Attendance Code 'U'), which will affect their attendance record.

If a child arrives late to school (after 8:45 am when the gates close), they must be signed into the main school office with the reasons for their lateness recorded clearly. The office staff will inform the Attendance Officer who will monitor lateness and punctuality of children. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. The attendance of classes, year groups or groups of pupils (e.g. FSM or SEND) is also monitored. Where data identifies trends or patterns, action will be taken by school staff to consider strategies to support or promote attendance of this group.

Children need to be collected promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns as necessary with other agencies, if deemed appropriate. If no alternative is available, the school will place a child into the after-school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.

6.5 Following up unexplained absence

If a child, **including a nursery aged child** is absent, parents/carers must contact the school before 8:45am on the first day of absence by telephone (**01280 813273**) or email (office@georgegrenville.co.uk) with an explanation of the absence.

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by contacting the parents via telephone and/or text message each day.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary:
    - This will include a home visit, if contact has not been established by 10:30am.
    - If we cannot make contact with the parent or child's other emergency contacts at this time, we will consider this a safeguarding risk and follow our safeguarding policy, which may involve contacting external agencies.

- If a child is not seen and contact has not been established with a parent/carer or any of the emergency contacts after three days of absence, the school is required to start 'child missing in education procedures', which would involve external agencies.
- If a pupil is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days, the school will notify the local authority that the child is 'at risk of missing'. This is a legal requirement. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make any necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 7.3) as appropriate.

6.6 Reporting to parents

Parents/carers receive an attendance report each term. Attendance is also discussed during parents' evenings and included within the children's end of year summer report.

Parents of children whose attendance is causing concern will be sent letters to inform them of these concerns and offer support, as per our school attendance monitoring procedure, outlined in 7.2

7. Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

All requests must be submitted on the 'leave of absence' form, so that the necessary details are provided, enabling the headteacher to determine whether or not the absence can be authorised. Unfortunately, requests via phone call and email cannot be processed. The leave of absence forms can be downloaded from the website or a hard copy can be obtained from the office – either in person or via your child's book bag, on request.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 6.2 and 6.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when the headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is an exceptional circumstance.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers)

and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Examples of where absence will **not be authorised** include:

- Family holiday (including where it is cheaper to book during term time)
- Shopping/day trip/visit to a theme park
- A birthday treat
- Oversleeping due to a late or bad night
- Looking after other children/other family members.

A penalty notice will be considered for absences due to unauthorised holidays. The school follows Buckinghamshire Local Authority's systems and procedures for tackling unauthorized and irregular attendance, which are underpinned by the DfE's statutory guidance. See section 7.2 Reducing persistent absence and 7.3 Legal Sanctions for more information.

7.2 Reducing persistent absence

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 96%. As such we monitor all absence and have clear procedures in place to help us reduce persistent absence.

A child is described as a persistent absentee if they have attendance of 90% or below. This equates to 4 weeks / 20 sessions /136 hours or more of missed schooling over the course of an academic year. This attendance figure is reported nationally and picked up through the local census information.

Attendance will be regularly monitored and the school will contact parents/carers of pupils with lower attendance (below 95%) and those at risk of becoming a persistent absentee (90% or below), as outlined in the flow charts below.

The school endeavours to work in close partnership with families to identify barriers to attendance and provide the necessary support to improve the pupils' attendance.

Where this absence is authorised, school will meet with parents/carers in order to ascertain any underlying medical reasons for the level of absence. The school may decide not to authorise any future absences without medical evidence.

Irregular Attendance Monitoring

Under 95% Attendance

If a child's attendance drops below 95%, school will:

- Send a letter via Insight raising these initial concerns
- Monitor attendance for six school weeks**,** with a review after three school weeks

If attendance improves, we will continue to monitor and work with the family to:

- support ongoing progress
- reinforce positive attendance habits
- address any future challenges promptly

If attendance decreases or there is no improvement, school will:

- call parents/carers to discuss the reasons for continued low attendance and offer support
- send a letter notifying parents/carers of the impact of attendance dropping further
- monitor attendance for a further three school weeks

If there is no improvement or attendance decreases, school will:

- ask parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss in detail the reasons for continued poor attendance

After 3 weeks, if there is no improvement or attendance worsens, we will:

- seek advice from Buckinghamshire School Attendance Team
- continue to work with the family to support improvements

Irregular Attendance Monitoring

Under 90% Attendance

If a child's attendance drops below 90%, school will:

- send parents/carers a letter sharing our concerns
- implement a monitoring period of three school weeks
- maintain regular phone and email contact with parents during this time

If attendance improves, school will continue to monitor and work with the family to:

- support ongoing progress
- reinforce positive attendance habits
- address any future challenges promptly

If there is no improvement, or attendance decreases, school will:

- telephone parents/carers to discuss concerns
- send out a formal letter - referencing the Bucks Irregular Attendance Flow Chart
- continue to monitor attendance for a further three school weeks
- maintain regular contact (phone/email) during this period to review progress and provide support

If there is no improvement or attendance decreases, we will:

- ask parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss in detail the reasons for continued poor attendance
- complete and sign a parent contract in line with our attendance policy

After 3 weeks, if there is no improvement or attendance worsens, we will:

- follow the guidelines set out in the Buckinghamshire School Attendance Guide
- issue the Bucks 1a letter to parents/carers
- continue to monitor attendance for a further three school weeks
- follow the appropriate Bucks County Council attendance procedures and guidelines during this period

What is a parent contract?

A parent contract is an agreement between the parent or carer, and the school. It is not intended to be a punishment, rather, it should be viewed as a way for the school and parents/carers to work together to improve their child's attendance, and an action plan for all to adhere to in order to improve the situation. This is a voluntary arrangement between the school and the parent or carer which provides an opportunity to put in support. If a parent or carer decides not to enter into a contract, they will need to try and find other ways of improving their child's attendance and will be asked how they intend to do this. In all instances, a refusal to sign a parenting contract or breach of parenting contract will be disclosed to the court.

If there is no marked improvement in the child's attendance after a review period has taken place, the school representative will refer this to the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

7. 3 Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty Notices (See Appendix 2)

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for Buckinghamshire Local Authority.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

George Grenville Academy work hard to promote high attendance throughout the school. We do this by:

- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement.
- Ensuring there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Liaising closely with outside professionals to provide extra support when needed. (e.g. school nurse team, social workers, family resilience, young carers).
- Taking into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively.
- Understanding the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff.
- Engaging extra in-school pastoral support or emotional literacy support if needed.
- Celebrating high attendance in classes and assemblies.
- Link high attendance clearly with school values.
- Design and implement a whole-school curriculum which engages pupil interest to encourage and ensure high attendance.

8.1 Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

The school recognises the wide range of barriers which can impact attendance, including:

- Mental ill health (including emotionally-based school avoidance)
- Physical ill health
- SEND
- Challenges retuning to school following a prolonged period of absence

In such cases, the school collaborates closely with the family and any external agencies involved to identify the barriers a pupil may be facing and determine the support needed to overcome them. This support is tailored to the pupil's specific needs and individual circumstances.

It may include:

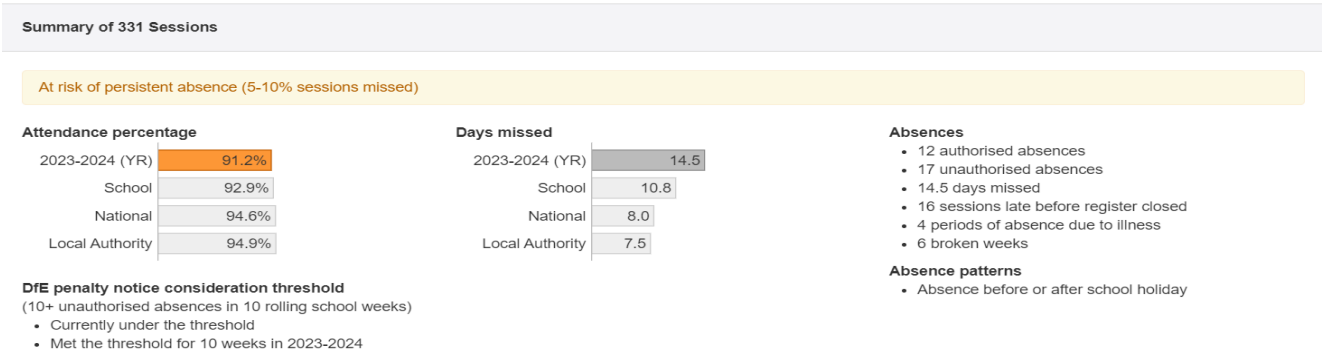
- Alterations to the curriculum
- A reduced timetable
- A softer start to the morning (e.g. slightly later arrival, different drop-off point, met by an individual member of staff, transition objects etc.)
- Regular check-ins with a familiar and trusted member or staff
- Individual interventions
- Individualised incentives

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupils' needs, the school will inform the local authority.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring Attendance

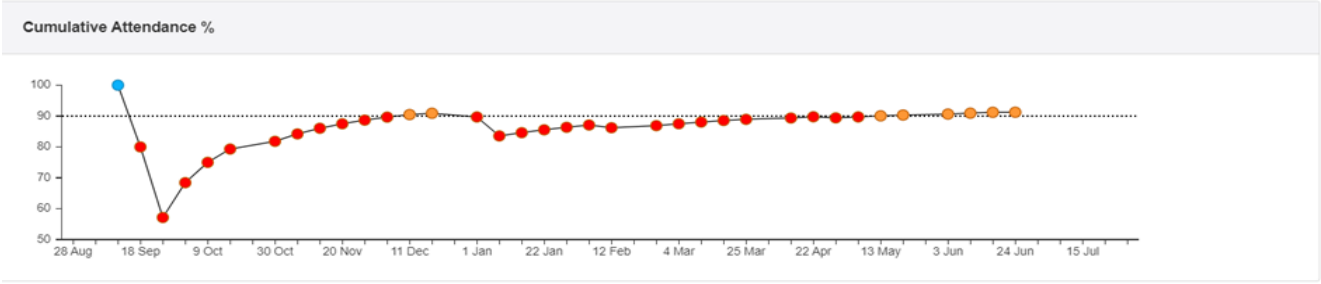
The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. It is monitored through SIMs and Insight – a data system in which every pupil has an individual tab displaying key information.



This informs our attendance letters. Each registration code is tracked so that we can closely monitor every pupil's attendance.



We can also see where improvements are being made through home/school attendance intervention.



Pupils falling below the 90% dotted line, are classed as 'Persistent Absentees'; it is this dip in attendance which triggers our attendance letters. This reporting is all in line with the Department for Education's (DfE) expectations.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Ensure regular attendance reports are made available to class teachers, via our electronic recording systems, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Issue letters and hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7.3 above)

Leavers
If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to secondary school) parents are asked to give the office staff comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. If children leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C (an authorised absence).

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sport
Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national or international event or competition. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Headteacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor

as part of their coaching.

Impact

George Grenville Academy recognises the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality and will continually evaluate the attendance trends within the school to ensure that children attain their potential and are fully prepared for the next stage of their education. It fully utilises its attendance strategy to evaluate attendance trends and to quickly react to any concerns.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum biannually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention

		• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: Penalty Notices



Apendix 3: Example of leave of absence request form.

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Important information for parents – please read before completing this form

The Department for Education guidance, ***Working together to improve school attendance*** advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government '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'.

Requests for leave must be made in **not less than one month in advance**, otherwise we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

Our aim is for every pupil's attendance to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. If you require any support with ensuring your child's attendance, please contact [Insert name and contact details].

I have read the above information and wish to apply for leave of absence from school for:

Child's Full Name:	**Date of Birth:**	**Class:**

Parent/Carer Details (please list all parents)

First Name:		**Surname:**	
Date of Birth:		**Relationship to the child:**	
Address and postcode:			
Telephone number:			
First Name:		**Surname:**	
Date of Birth:		**Relationship to the child:**	
Address and postcode:			
Telephone number:			

Siblings: Please provide the name of any siblings and the school that they attend

Child's Full Name:	**Date of Birth:**	**School:**

Details of the absence

Date of First day of absence:		**Date of last day of absence:**	

Details of the absence			
Date of First day of absence:		**Date of last day of absence:**	
Total Number of days absent:		**Expected date of return to school:**	
Please provide the reason for this request including supporting evidence:			

Please read the following statement and sign to indicate you understand the this:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied, and my child is absent during this period. I understand that a fine will be payable per parent, per child.

I have read and understood George Grenville Academy's attendance policy. I have read and understood the information regarding penalty notices for absence from school and the action they may take.

Signed:		**Full name:**		**Date:**	
Signed:		**Full name:**		**Date:**	

To be completed by the school:

RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- ☐ Permission is refused in accordance with the school policy.
- ☐ Permission is given for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances as stated above.

Signed:…….. Date:……..

Copies to: Parent/Class teacher/School File/ Cpoms/ Family worker