

Greenford High School

Policy Document



Attendance Policy

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Staff Responsible	Mr N Laryea AHT
Governing Committee	Students
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Approved by	Chair Students Committee

Attendance Policy

GREENFORD HIGH SCHOOL RECOGNISES THAT:

- Most students attend school regularly to learn, to socialise with friends and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well rounded and responsible citizens.
- There is a clear link between students' attendance and their level of achievement at school. We want all the students to achieve the very best they can and for this they need to be in school regularly.
- Late arrival disrupts the education not only of the student who is late but also of others in the class.
- It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children attend the school where they are on roll.
- Some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported at times in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

GREENFORD HIGH SCHOOL EXPECTS:

All students will:

- Arrive before 8.30am, appropriately prepared for the day, and register.
- Attend school regularly, and for the whole school day.
- Inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that affects their attendance at school.

All our students' parents/carers will:

- Ensure their children attend school every day unless they are too ill to attend or there is an acceptable reason for absence.
- Ensure their children arrive on time, prepared and equipped for the day.
- Inform the school's Absence Line (020 8578 9152) as soon after 8am, as possible, on the day, if their child is going to be absent.
- Communicate with school about their children's progress and attend meetings such as Parents' Evenings.

Greenford High School will:

- Provide students with appropriate education.
- Respond to concerns raised by both students and parents/carers in a prompt, fair and proper manner.
- Follow the procedures of school and the School Attendance Service in dealing with attendance issues.

PROCEDURES

Clarity about who does what and when is important as this avoids confusion.

Monitoring

Attendance performance throughout the school will be monitored in a number of ways:

- Registration in every lesson.
- Regular review of attendance by Attendance Officer.
- Regular reporting of attendance figures to the Governing Body.
- Individual students' attendance will be included in reports to parents.
- The Form Tutor is to have weekly conversations challenging absence. They will take ownership for monitoring students in their forms with 92-96% attendance.

This school Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by Governors and Senior Leadership Team and amended as appropriate.

Registration

The register provides the daily record of attendance of all students. It contributes to a student's end of term reports, record of achievement and references. It is a legal document that may be required in a court of law as evidence, for example in prosecutions for non-attendance.

Greenford High School uses Lesson Monitor electronic registration system. The main codes used are those laid down by the DfES from September 2006:

- / present AM
- \ present PM
- O unauthorised absence
- I authorised absence for illness

- M authorised absence for medical/dentist appointment
- C authorised absence for other circumstances
- L late arrival before register closed
- H family holiday authorised by Headteacher
- G family holiday not authorised by Headteacher
- U late (after register closed)
- V educational visit or trip

See **Appendix 1** for the full list of attendance codes and their meanings.

The school day begins at 08.35 for students. Registration will take place during form time –first 20 minutes of the school day. Where a student arrives after the start of registration he/she will be marked as late. Students late after 10.30 am will be coded as U which constitutes legally an unauthorised absence. It is therefore essential that parents inform the school if a student is late because of attending an urgent appointment such as with dentist or doctor, so that the absence can be authorised.

Registers are also taken in every lesson using Lesson Monitor. Lesson registration enables patterns of internal truancy to be identified which may suggest problems with a particular subject or a wider issue. Students will be spoken to about any such issues and parents informed if this does not resolve the matter.

Follow up on absent students

Only the school can authorise absence, on the basis of information provided by parents/carers. Where explanations are not felt to be acceptable, the absence will remain unauthorised and the parents/carers informed.

If students are absent without their parents/carers' knowledge this is a cause for concern as they may be putting themselves at risk in a number of ways. Communication between home and school is vital in helping to protect them. For this reason we ask that:

- In all cases of absence parents/carers contact the school on the Absence Phone line (020 8578 9152) as soon after 8am as possible to allow the school to record the absence and if appropriate authorise it. Parents/carers should give an indication of the probable length of absence if likely to be longer than one day. If the explanation for absence is not accepted as justifiable, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and the parents/carers informed.

Where there has been no contact from parents/carers and the child remains absent without explanation, school staff will make contact with parents/carers of students to ask the reason for absence. In the first instance contact will be by phone; Truancy Call, the automated 'first day of absence' calling system will be used but where parents/carers cannot be contacted this will be followed up in writing. For this reason parents/carers must inform the school immediately if their contact details change.

If a student is missing from school for some days and parents/carers cannot be contacted then the schools' Attendance Officer will visit the home address and carry out the process of 'Reasonable Enquiry' to establish whether or not they have moved. If they have moved they will be referred to the Children Missing Education Officer attached to the Ealing Schools' Attendance Service. Where they are non-attenders they will be dealt with, in the first instance, by the Schools' Attendance Officer who will try to work with the family to break down the barriers to attendance. If the situation remains unresolved the Ealing Schools' Attendance Service will be contacted.

The school expects regular attendance. Regular attendance at Greenford High School is defined as attendance at school on each day the school is open for the pupils, unless there is a legitimate reason to be absent, and in accordance with the registration regulation 2006.

Our expectation is for every student to attend at least 95%, which generally allows for average absence due to illness, unavoidable cause and other absences which can be legally authorised.

If a student is leaving Greenford High School, a Leaver's Form needs to be completed in order for the school and Local Authority to carry out their duties of safeguarding and of tracking your child's education. **(Appendix 2).**

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

Incentives

Students with 100% attendance for the year are entered in to a prize draw and also rewarded with a certificate and a letter home.

Students who achieve 100% attendance for a half-term will be awarded achievement points and will also receive a letter for their parents/carers.

Attendance figures for each tutor group in years 7 – 11 are published weekly and the tutor group, in each year group, with the highest attendance is celebrated in assembly.

Support in school

The school believes firmly in working in partnership with parents to resolve issues. Parents/carers and students must contact the school if they are experiencing problems with attendance. This should be to the tutor, Head or Deputy Head of Year, or Attendance Officer. Additional support can be provided through the School Counsellor, the Inclusion Team and the Attendance Officer.

Students with low attendance from Primary school will be invited to 'The Rise and Shine Breakfast Club' to help them integrate into school and improve attendance.

Links to other policies

In all cases where attendance is a problem, consideration will be given to whether any aspect of one of our other policies such as Anti-Bullying, Behaviour or Special Needs should be implemented to help support improved attendance, for example, whether the student has an unrecognised special educational need that adds to their reluctance to attend.

Reintegration

We all realise that returning to school following a period of absence can be very difficult for some young people, whatever the reason for their absence. In these situations school staff will plan carefully with parents/carers and student, together with any relevant agencies about how best to support the student's return to school.

In some cases, for a short period, it may be appropriate to start the reintegration gradually, building up to a full-time timetable: this will only be done in discussion with the school, and will be based on the student's individual circumstances. Other support will also be considered, from mentors through to appropriate rewards for improvement and achievement.

Punctuality

If a student arrives at school after 8.30am they will be marked late in the register and given an afternoon detention on the same day. Their Planner will be stamped on the appropriate weeks' page and this will need to be shown to the teacher who is in the lesson at the time that they arrive.

If a student arrives at school after 8.50am they will be required to sign in at the main school reception, their Planner will be stamped and they will receive an afternoon detention. If they have a legitimate reason i.e. dental/medical appointment, the register will be annotated accordingly and no detention will be given.

A text is sent to the parent/carer on the day of lateness. There is an escalation of sanctions to deal with those students who are persistently late.

Students who continue to be persistently late will be at a disadvantage when a reference for college or employment is required as this will reflect their poor punctuality.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Consistent attendance to school is vital for students to achieve their potential.

Early Intervention

As a school, we believe that early intervention is key when dealing with attendance. The attendance of all our students is regularly reviewed by the Attendance officer who consults with the Year Teams to determine what action to take.

Part of our early intervention strategy is the use of our attendance tracker, which enables form tutors to review their student's attendance on a weekly basis. Any attendance concerns are passed on to the Year Teams and Attendance Officer.

When a student's attendance falls to:-

Less than 92%

- The student becomes part of the Attendance Officer's cohort.
- Meeting arranged with parents and student to discuss how to improve.
- An attendance contract could be offered.
- Regular reviews/meetings take place with referrals to other agencies possible.

Less than 90%

- The student is referred to the Borough Attendance Officer.
- The student is now classified as a "Persistent Absentee".
- Medical evidence is required for any absence to be authorised.
- Possible prosecution and fine from the Borough.

Referral criteria for intervention from the Borough of Ealing's Schools Attendance Service

- Students whose attendance falls below 92% will be monitored by the school Attendance Officer. Students will be seen in school and parents/carers will be invited in to school to discuss their child's attendance.
- Students, whose attendance falls below 90% and where much of the absence is unauthorised (truancy), will be referred for action by the Borough of Ealing's Schools Attendance Service according to the process outlined above.
- Missing students will be referred to the Borough of Ealing's Children Missing Education Officer once school staff have tried and failed to contact parents/carers.

Request for leave of absence during term time

- As a school, we are increasingly concerned with the number of holidays / leaves of absence parents are asking to take for their children during term time. This is having a serious impact on our attendance rate; on average 750 days of absence per year are due to these requests. This is having a

damaging effect on the education of these children who are missing their schooling.

- Although we sympathise with parents for many of their requests, and understand that our school community, including our staff, have family spread all over the world, the Government has made it very clear to all schools that students, including Post-16 students, should not be taken out of school during term time.
- Any Leave of Absence is granted at the discretion of the Head. Requests for holiday in term time will not be authorised.
- Negotiations for Leave of Absence should be made, by parents, as early as possible; at least 2 weeks' notice is required. They will then be asked to complete a form recording all the necessary details (**Appendix 3**). If parents do not apply for the Leave of Absence in advance the absence will be recorded as unauthorised; Government regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval.
- Any unauthorised absence is unlawful and a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued.
- The completed form should be submitted to Mr Laryea (Key Stage 3) and Mr Harvey (Key Stage 4) who will consult with Year Teams, Attendance Officer and the Senior Leadership Team before discussing the matter with parents.
- Figures for leave of absences will be regularly reported to the Governors' Students Committee.
- Once an absence extends over 20 days, the school will remove the student from roll and offer their place to a student on the waiting list. Any students returning after 20 days will need to formally re-apply for their position at the school. However, parents need to be aware that this place may already have been filled and the child may have to apply to a different school.

APPENDICES

1. DFE Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings
2. Leaving School Form for completion by parent/carer
3. Parental Request for Leave of Absence Form

APPENDIX 1

DFE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

APPENDIX 2



LEAVING SCHOOL FORM FOR PARENTS

If your child is leaving school fill in this form AND RETURN IT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. If you are not sure of the details of your move, please let us know as soon as possible, but fill in this form as fully as you can before you leave.

SCHOOL NAME _____

Why you need to complete this form:

- Your current school is expected to transfer information to the new school.
- The School and Local Authority have a duty to track your child's education.
- If you fail to provide details to either the school/local authority further checks will be carried out to determine your child's new educational provision which may include contacting Social Services and the police.
- These checks will be undertaken in the interest of safeguarding and to ensure every child is receiving suitable education as legally required by the Education Act 1996.

PUPIL DETAILS		
NAME:	DOB: / /	YEAR GROUP:
NAME:	DOB: / /	YEAR GROUP:
NAME:	DOB: / /	YEAR GROUP:
NAME:	DOB: / /	YEAR GROUP:
REASON FOR LEAVING		
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Address	Address Line 1 _____ Address Line 2 _____ Address Line 3 _____ County _____ Post Code _____ Local Authority _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Country	Address Line 1 _____ Address Line 2 _____ Address Line 3 _____ Country _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, give details		

PARENT CONTACT DETAILS

Father/Carer Name	
Mother/Carer Name	
Mobile Number/s	
Landline Telephone	
Email	

EXTRA CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE COMPLETE

We will only contact them if we need information and cannot contact you about your child's new school. Please choose a friend or relative who you will be staying in touch with and who is not expected to move in the near future.

Friend/Relative Name	
Relationship to You	
Mobile Number/s	
Landline Telephone	
Email	

SIGNATURE

Parent/Carer Name	
Signature	
Date	

ANY OTHER DETAILS

Please provide any other information if appropriate. For instance if you have applied for or accepted a new school place in your new area.

APPENDIX 3

PARENTAL REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Complete & return to reception, for the attention of Mr Laryea (KS3) & Mr Harvey (KS4); who will arrange an interview time to discuss your request.

STUDENT'S NAME:	
Form:	Date:
Reason For Request:	
Date Of Departure:	No. Of Days Absent: <u>(max 3 days)</u>
Date Of Return:	Contact No:
Parent/Guardian's Name:	
Relationship To Child: Father Mother Other Brother	
Signature:	
<u>SCHOOL ACTION</u>	
Date of Interview:	
Other comments:	
Please note: <u>Only emergencies or exceptional circumstances will be considered. Supporting documentation will be required. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £120 will be issued by the LEA. If the FPN remains unpaid after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.</u>	