



# The Grangefield Academy

## Attendance Policy and Procedures

<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>	
<b>Date Confirmed by Governing Board</b>	
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	September 2017

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## 1. Statement of Intent

The Grangefield Academy recognises the importance of full attendance and aims to ensure that all students achieve and maintain high standards of attendance.

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and therefore is a priority. The Grangefield Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all students.

We aim to develop students to their full potential; parent/carers have a responsibility to aid the education process by ensuring that their children attend the academy regularly, on time, and in a suitable condition to learn.

We expect our parent/carers to value The Grangefield Academy and their child's education and to support our academy's procedures.

***In implementing this policy all staff must recognise that attendance is a primary issue in the safeguarding of young people. The registration of students and monitoring absence and punctuality are not simply a recording of attendance but a key element in ensuring the safety and well-being of young people. As key workers with children, teachers, support and administration staff must take seriously the full implications of this policy and the need to protect the students in their care.***

## 2. Academy Attendance – The Statutory Framework

Education Act 1944 – Establishes the duty of parent/carers to ensure regular attendance of students.

Education Act 1996 – Establishes the duty of LA's to enforce academy attendance of pupils.

Education Act 1996 – Establishes the duty of LA's to enforce academy attendance (Section 444). The Act states that "The parent of a child of compulsory academy age registered at an academy and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law".

Pupil's Registration Regulations 1986 – Establishes the criteria for the maintenance of Attendance Registers.

The Education (Pupil's attendance Records) Regulations 1991.

Framework for the Inspection of Academies (OFSTED) – 2011.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1997 (amended) provides the new registration categories of Approved Educational Activity. (Amending Regulation 3 (2), (3), (5) of the Education Regulations 1995).

### **3. Registration**

- 3.1** There is a legal requirement upon academies to keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions, students are marked present or absent. The Education (Students Attendance Record) Regulations 1991 introduced a further requirement that attendance registers must show whether an absence of a student of compulsory academy age is authorised or unauthorised.
- 3.2** Both staff and students see the taking of registers as an integral part of the academy day, as was indeed intended in law. Particular attention is paid to accurate registration and to the preservation and security of registers.
- 3.3** In accordance with current legislation, each class in the academy has an attendance register. It is academy policy that registers are completed by 8.50a.m.
- 3.4** It is our policy to record a late mark for children who arrive at the academy after 8.30am.
- 3.5** We believe that students arriving late seriously disrupt their work and that of others. Our policy is to encourage punctuality. Children will be recorded as being late once registration has taken place.

Our registration procedure is included as Appendix 1.

### **4. Absence**

- 4.1** It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform the academy of the reason for a child's absence. We should receive notification on the first day of absence.
- 4.2** It is a fact that parentally-condoned unjustified absence is a serious problem in some academies. This can be every bit as damaging as the more traditional forms of truancy.  
  
Only the academy, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parent/carers. The fact that a parent/carer has offered a note or other notification (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the academy to accept it if the academy does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered – or where no explanation is forthcoming at all the absence will be treated as unauthorised. Where parentally condoned unjustified absence appears to be a problem in relation to a particular student, we will refer to the Attendance Officer at an early opportunity.
- 4.3** An excessive amount of authorised absence can also seriously disrupt continuity of learning and encourage disaffection. We are alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence. We may authorise absence retrospectively where we are satisfied as to the explanation offered. Absences of students of compulsory academy age without valid reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised.
- 4.4** Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 provides that no offence is committed where a student of compulsory academy age is prevented from attending the academy by reason of illness. If we are satisfied that a student is absent as a result of illness the absence will be treated as authorised.
- 4.5** Where we have reason to doubt the validity of an explanation offered in respect of a particular absence, further information will be requested by the academy from the child's

parent/carers. If the academy continues to be dissatisfied then the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

- 4.6** Where there is doubt about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, the academy or the Attendance Officer can refer the matter to a doctor working in the Academy Health Service to arrange a special medical, or to make contact with the student's GP. If a student is absent for a prolonged period or academy notices a pattern emerging, early contact will be made with the Attendance Officer and/or the Academy Health Service.
- 4.7** Leave for medical or dental appointments will be given (i.e. the absence will be authorised) where confirmation has been received from the parent/carer (either in person, in writing or by a telephone call) or on production of an appointment card.
- 4.8** When a student has been absent for three days, a member of staff will make a home visit to deliver work to conduct a welfare check and deliver work. If there has not been any contact from home the visit will be conducted in two days. When a family cannot be contacted and there is no information, the child will be reported as missing to the local authority.

## **5. Reporting of Absence Procedure**

- 5.1** Parents/carers are expected to telephone, see the Learning Guide or send a note on the first day of their child's absence. This will allow the Learning Guide to interpret the category of absence. If information is not received, the academy will contact the parent/carer to ascertain the cause of the absence. If the family is not on the telephone, a letter or text message may be sent.
- 5.2** Notes of telephone messages and a note of any verbal explanations should be dated, and forwarded to the office for filing.
- 5.3** Parent/carers who wish to take their child out of the academy for a Holiday or Religious Observance should contact the office to make an appointment with the designates SLT responsible for attendance. Parents/carers will be informed of the implications on their child's education. Students will be expected to attend extra 'catch up' sessions after school, on their return from holiday.

There are times during an academy year when a child may experience additional problems because of term-time leave such as:-

- close to exams or tests for example, during GCSE and other examination courses
- during the first year at a new academy
- at the beginning of a new academy term

It is the academy's policy to refuse a request for term-time leave. If the child is still taken out of the academy, this will be recorded as unauthorised.

- 5.4** Where a student is present for registration but then has to attend an appointment, the academy need take no action beyond recording the fact that (for the purpose of emergency evacuation) the student, although registered, is not physically present. Similarly the academy must note the presence of a student (again for purposes of emergency evacuation) who was not there when the register was being taken but returns

later from an appointment. The Learning Guide or person who is given the information will make a note in the relevant day's column in the register as to the times the child came or left so that there is information on the child's whereabouts in the event of emergency evacuation.

## 6. **Categorising Absence**

Our policy deals in general with the categories of absence and cannot cover every eventuality. It will be necessary on occasion to exercise reasonable discretion when investigating some absences. However the following key points must be remembered:

- registered students of compulsory academy age are required by law to be in the academy;
- whilst it is right that we recognise that individual students and families have problems our aim is always to expect regular attendance;
- lateness will be actively discouraged;
- where a student is absent without prior authorisation an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming (for whatever reason), the absence will be treated as unauthorised and the register completed accordingly;
- we are not obliged to accept notes from a parent/carer where there is reason to doubt the validity of the explanation offered;
- explanations such as minding the house, looking after other children, or shopping trips within academy hours are not acceptable reasons for absence;
- parents/carers should not expect, or be led to expect, that, as of right, the academy will agree to family holidays during term time. It is the academy's policy to refuse a request for term-time leave.
- even where absence is authorised, we will be alert to emerging patterns of absence, which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning.
- in promoting regular attendance, we will work in partnership with appropriate Local Authority and external agency personnel.

## 7. **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

**7.1** A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they fall below 90% attendance at any time in the academy year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level may cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent/carer's fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

**7.2** We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk or moving towards that mark is given priority and intervention and support is given as per the academy's interventions schedule (Appendix 1)

**7.3** PA students are tracked and monitored carefully.

**7.4** Additional support may be offered to our PA students. This may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, counseling, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the LA Attendance Officer.

## **8. Lateness**

**8.1** It is our policy to actively discourage late arrival. All students arriving after 8.30am must sign in at Main Reception. A student arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. In recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather or occasional public transport difficulties), we may keep registers open for a reasonable period.

**8.2** For registration to mean anything at all, a firm line will be taken on late arrivals. To do otherwise undermines the whole purpose of registration and may serve to encourage other students to arrive late. Any student arrives late to an AM session without good reason will be issued with a detention which should be served at break time on the same day.

**8.3** Where a student does arrive late to class, his or her presence on site will still need to be noted for purposes of emergency evacuation. Anyone arriving late must be recorded on SIMs with the appropriate number of minutes noted.

**8.4** In responding to lateness, we will of course need to take account of the individual circumstances of each case. In some instances enquiries may reveal that the late arrival stems from difficulties at home or other genuinely unavoidable circumstances. Learning Guides of students who persistently fail to arrive on time with valid reason need to seek an early meeting with parent/carers whilst keeping their Personal Development Leader (PDL) informed. If the parent/carers do not have any valid reason for the child's persistent lateness the PDL will consult with the Behaviour and Attendance Coordinator.

## **9. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **9.1 Student's Role**

Students should:

- Attend the academy regularly.
- Arrive on time and equipped to learn.
- Discuss with staff or parent/carers any problems that may prevent them from attending the academy.
- Encourage punctuality and attendance amongst their peers.
- Record their attendance on a weekly basis in their planner.

### **9.2 Parent/carer's Role**

Parents should:

- Secure regular academy attendance of their children.
- Ensure that their children arrive at the academy on time, properly dressed, equipped and ready to learn.
- Work in partnership with the academy, instilling in their children respect for the academy's policies and procedures.

- Contact the academy whenever their child is unable to attend, preferably by 9.30 am, or if unable to phone to respond to first day letter.
- Confirm the reason for absence by letter when a child returns from a lengthy absence (1 week or more).
- Inform the academy of any problem that may prevent their child from attending the academy.
- In the event of an exclusion from the academy, supervise their child at home making sure that work set is completed.

### **9.3 Attendance and Behaviour Support Assistant / Behaviour and Attendance Coordinator Role.**

Attendance and Behaviour support assistant and the Behaviour and Attendance Co-ordinator will;

- Examine data from register.
- Collate attendance figures on a weekly basis to give to SLT Attendance
- Provide one to one support for children and families.
- Conduct home visits for absence.
- Meet with Head of schools weekly.
- Refer to Local Authority attendance officer.
- Problem solve/mediate to improve attendance.
- Liaise with PDLs weekly, highlighting students of concern
- Meet with PDLs and Head of School's termly to address issues in processes
- Liaise with Attendance Officer (Local Authority).
- Liaise with the academy nurse and other agencies.
- Signpost students and parent/carers to other agencies.
- Conduct truancy sweeps outside the academy grounds.
- Internal truancy checks in liaison with Head of Schools.
- Feedback attendance issues to senior colleagues/Schools.
- Contribute to assemblies to promote good attendance.
- Input to Learning Guide Groups on attendance issues.
- Collate census/Local Authority statistical returns.
- Prepare approved standard attendance letters as appropriate
- Intervene as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)
- Report Missing Children to the Local Authority.

### **9.4 Learning Guide's Role**

Learning Guides will:

- Attempt 1<sup>st</sup> day contact.
- Follow up any reasons for absence not provided by first day contact.
- Complete the Absence Reports, and note and record any messages from the office re: individual students.
- Keep the folder free of notices and to file letters from parent/carers in the student's file.
- Assist in selection of targeted students.
- Monitor the attendance of all the students in the Learning Guide group, and offer support and guidance where necessary.
- Carry out sanctions as indicated for students who are late.



- Liaise with the PDL on attendance concerns and inform Attendance Team.
- Communicate Attendance and Punctuality Procedures to students.
- Administer a Daily Report where necessary.
- Give acknowledgement and praise to students who have good levels of attendance and punctuality and create a visual record to celebrate attendance in Learning Guide rooms.
- Review the student's record of attendance and punctuality half termly as part of the Record of Achievement Process. To set targets as part of the process.
- Return processed holiday slips to students and record dates for future reference.
- Record all actions regarding punctuality/attendance in the student's file. This will be required if a referral is made to the Attendance Officer for court proceedings.
- Intervene as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)

## **9.5 Personal Development Leader (PDL) Role**

PDLs will:

- Complete 1<sup>st</sup> day absence contact with parent/carer.
- Work and support Attendance and Behaviour support assistant with students.
- Intervene as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)
- Respond with appropriate interventions as directed by Head of School (including tracker) in their Learning Guide Groups.
- Meet with HoS at least once per week to discuss trends and interventions.
- Complete the weekly report sheets on behaviour and attendance.
- Identify patterns of absence and respond with appropriate interventions with individuals and groups.
- Attend weekly attendance meetings to share key findings and interventions.
- Complete a Quality Assurance Report on behaviour and Attendance for their specific School.
- Create a board in their School to identify year group and learning guide group attendance and rewards.

## **9.6 Heads of School**

- Meet with PDL weekly to discuss attendance trends
- Review attendance % and set targets for Learning Guides.
- Monitor the attendance processes and initiatives.
- Review and update Attendance Policy and Procedures.
- Set Attendance Targets for each School and Whole School
- Intervene, direct and support as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)
- Liaise with attendance team to create an attendance plan to raise attendance.

## **9.7 Governors**

- Attend Attendance Case Conferences.
- Agree Attendance Targets.
- Ratify Attendance Policy and Procedures.
- Report on attendance statistics.
- Intervene as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)

## **9.8 The Role of the Local Authority Attendance Officer**

The Local Authority Attendance Officer should:

- Liaise, where appropriate, between home and the academy.
- Investigate irregular attendance or lateness which may give rise to concerns that a child may be at risk.
- Complete a regular register check; giving feedback and advice on improving attendance.
- Work with children who are experiencing problems with attendance and/or punctuality.
- Enforce the Law in relation to academy attendance.
- Advise and/or assist the academy in setting attendance targets.
- Intervene, direct and support as per the intervention schedule (Appendix 2)

### **Referral to the LA Attendance Officer**

Referral to the LA Attendance Officer will be made in the following circumstances:

- absence is regular and/or repeated and therefore affecting the child's education;
- when a student has been absent for two consecutive weeks and the absence is unauthorised;
- the intervention by the academy has failed to secure a student's regular attendance.
- A child is missing from education, without any notification or contact with the family. (Normally 5 days absence, but it will depend upon the individual.)

Referrals can only be made through the Attendance and Behaviour support assistant. A referral form will be completed for each student.

Progress reports on referrals will be given to the academy at regular intervals by the Attendance Officer (as agreed between the academy and the Attendance Officer).

Details of the procedure followed by the Attendance Officer can be found in the Local Authority Attendance Handbook

When making a referral to the Attendance Officer by EHa, it is important that the following information is included:

- Action taken to date by the academy.
- Parent/carers/students attitudes towards the academy and our intervention.
- Parental reasons for non-attendance.
- Action taken by the academy to resolve any identified problems.
- Information regarding any special educational needs the student may have, academic attainments and support being provided by the centre.
- Information regarding potential aggression from the parent/carer.

## 10 Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality

The academy aims to develop and maintain an ethos that demonstrates to students, parent/carers and the community the value of good attendance and punctuality. For example:

- Termly attendance certificates for students with 100% and 99.9% - 95% attendance.
- Weekly attendance prize draw for students with 100% attendance for the previous week.
- Letters are sent to parents of students with 100% attendance.
- Letters to parents/carers to acknowledge significant improvement.
- High or improved records of attendance and punctuality will be reported via academy reports.

## 11. Long Term Absence

In cases of absence of up to 15 days due to illness, work should be organised by the PDL. Absences which extend beyond this period of time will be reviewed and consideration given to alternative provision for the supply of work.

Support and guidance will be given to the student on their return by the LAM and teaching staff e.g. organising photocopied notes, allowing student to copy up work missed from another student, modifying the student's timetable, support from SEN or Learning Mentors.

## 12. Attendance Targets

	Targets 2016/17
% KS3 Attendance (per term)	96.0
% KS4 Attendance (per term)	94.5
% Overall Attendance (per term)	95.5
% Persistent Absence (cumulative since Sep)	<8.0

To enable The Grangefield Academy to achieve these targets, these systems have been developed to provide detailed robust data on academy attendance;

- A monitoring mechanism to ensure targets are being met.
- Regular data information to be shared with Senior Management Team, Pastoral and Curriculum Departments, Governors and Learning Guides.
- Learning Guide Group Weekly attendance chart displayed in Learning Guide rooms.
- Publish attendance in the academy.
- Celebrate good and improved attendance via the reward system.

- Information for parent/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality, via regular letters home, weekly newsletters and the academy website
- Use academy/Local Authority/DfES initiatives to target intervention and sanctions appropriately.

## APPENDIX 1

### REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

1. Registers will be completed as quickly as convenient, preceding both daily sessions. Paper register folders will be returned to the academy office following this registration period.
2. Students present will be marked with the code *I*.
3. Students not present will be marked with the code **N**.
4. Students arriving at the academy after registration in the mornings must report to the Lower School office.
5. Once a valid reason for absence is received, we may authorise that absence by amending the student's absence in SIMS. Reporting the reason for absence by telephone, verbally to a member of staff or a note are acceptable.

A list of symbols used for demarcating AUTHORISED absence is included in Table 1 in this document. Only the Principal can authorise absence.

6. Parent/carers removing their child from the academy during a session will be required to explain to their child's Learning Guide the reasons for this removal. A note can be written to explain this in the child's planner.

## APPENDIX 2 SECURING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE – INTERVENTION SCHEDULE

To secure excellent attendance, a series of positive interventions will be used.

- Key messages regarding attendance & punctuality displayed in classrooms – *Learning Guide*
- Monitor all students attendance & punctuality- *Learning Guide*
- Ensure students record their attendance in planner - *Learning Guide*
- Weekly student rewards for those who have 100% attendance.
- Key assembly to raise awareness - *SLT*
- Attendance figures to be sent with interim report - *SLT*

When attendance falls below acceptable standards, a series of staged responses will be used.

### Attendance below 93%

Contact with home and a plan put in place

This stage will involve:

- Letter sent to parent – Attendance and Behaviour support assistant
- Learning Guide informed of attendance concern – Attendance and Behaviour support assistant
- Students placed on a 6 week “At risk of PA” attendance plan.
- Medical evidence required for those who have not demonstrated any progress in their attendance.
- Parents invited in to discuss the attendance plan.6-week attendance plan The attendance plan must be reviewed weekly by the PDL and student.

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the local authority at this stage if the student has 10 unauthorised absences in a 6 week period.

### Attendance below 90% (Students in PA)

Formal Attendance Contract with Parents put in the form of an attendance plan.

This stage will involve:

- Parent invited into the academy, or meeting in family home – Attendance and Behaviour support assistant, *PDL*
- Formal Attendance Plan with Parents – Attendance and Behaviour Support Assistant, *LAM*.

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued at this stage if the students has 10 unauthorised absences in a 12 week period. Review EHa – *PDL*.

### Attendance below 85% (Students in PA)

Attendance Panel

This stage will involve:

- Refer to attendance service – Attendance and Behaviour Support Assistant
- Attendance Case Conference – Attendance and Behaviour Support Assistant /*SLT/Governors/LA Attendance Team*

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued at this stage if the students has 10 unauthorised absences in a 12 week period. The need for a EHa will be reviewed.

### Attendance below 80%

Attendance Case Conference &Fixed Penalty Notices

This stage will involve:

- Attendance Case Conference – Attendance and Behaviour Support Assistant /SLT/Governors/LA Attendance Team
- Prosecution – LA Attendance Team
- Fixed Penalty Notice

Review the EHa.

## Securing Excellent Attendance - Intervention schedule

### Appendix 3



Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

At The Grange Field Academy we are committed to providing students with the best educational opportunities available. To enable students to benefit from these opportunities it is essential that you ensure their regular academy attendance.

It has come to my attention that ..... (student) has been absent from the academy and we have not received any reasons for this absence.

Could you complete the information below and return it with ..... (student). If we do not receive any valid reasons for absence then we will mark this as unauthorised and may result in a referral to the Attendance Officer.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Vice Principal

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I would like to confirm that my son/daughter ..... was absent for .....days due to .....(reason for absence).

Signed ..... (parent/carers)

**APPENDIX 4**



Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

I am aware that ..... (student) has had a number of unexplained absences, this will be having an effect upon his/her learning.

I would therefore like to invite you to meet with me on ..... at ..... am/pm. I hope this meeting will give us the opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have and to work together to improve ..... attendance.

If this time is not appropriate please do not hesitate to contact me and we can arrange a more suitable time.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

Yours sincerely

Vice Principal



## APPENDIX 5

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