

Attendance and Punctuality - Learners Policy

Person Responsible:	V. Howe & L.Cooper (Deputy Head and Administration Manager), ratified by B. Elkins (Headteacher)
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Gretton School is owned and operated by Newcome Education, a subsidiary group of Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its learners and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside all of these policies in order to ensure an awareness of the bigger picture. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy, the Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

In all the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility

, or who has care of the child. [Department for Education guidance](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- *all biological parents, whether they are married or not*
- *any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative*
- *any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person*

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- *Peninsula HROnline*
- *Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)*
- *Carecheck (DBS)*
- *Educare (online CPD)*

1 INTRODUCTION

At Gretton, it is recognised that we cannot make a difference to the lives of the learners we work with unless they attend school regularly. We expect and aim towards 100% attendance for all our learners. We value effective communication with parents to ensure that authorised absences are correctly reported and monitored. We recognise that this communication is important as non-attendance can also indicate, particularly with our learners, unresolved anxieties or issues. We want to support parents and families by ensuring that strategies can be put in place to help with any attendance issues. We recognise that sometimes our learners will be late to school, however, if learners are in control of their arrival time and are arriving late, then this will be addressed by staff and strategies put in place to ensure punctuality is encouraged at all times.

2 PROCEDURES

- Parents will inform the school via phone (by 8.30am) if a learner is not attending school on that day, a reason is entered on the register explaining the absence.
- Registers are marked by form tutors/class teachers during registration which is between 8.45am and 9.00am.
- A learner is given a late mark if they arrive after 8.50am. Arrival between 8.50am and 9.00am will be marked as code L (late arrival before the register has closed). Arrival after 9.00am will be marked as code U (arrived in school after registration is closed).
- Learner absences are communicated to class teams by 9:15am (from a member of the Admin team).
- The class team checks attendance every morning, to identify any issues. Where a learner hasn't been registered by 9.15am and no parental communication has been received, this will trigger a "follow up call" which is made to parents by the class staff (supported by the admin team where required) . The reason for absence is established.
- All reasons for absence will be recorded in the register following the coded system set out.
- If no contact can be made with parents by 10:00am, then an unauthorised absence will be recorded in the register. If subsequently a message is received to explain the absence, then the register will be amended.
- Where a communication has been received from parents and persistent absence is noted, this is followed up by class staff or safeguarding.
- Afternoon registration opens at 1pm. Class staff are required to have registers completed by 1.15pm as this is when the afternoon registration closes. If learners are unaccounted for, we follow our safeguarding procedures.

- Learner's attendance is logged by school through SchoolPod. This allows the school to monitor attendance on a daily basis. If a learner's attendance becomes a cause for concern (for example if attendance drops below 95% either cumulatively or on a fortnightly basis) then this will be discussed in weekly Safeguarding, Attendance and Behaviour meetings with Key Stage Leads, the Safeguarding team, Behaviour and Welfare team, SENCO and Assistant Heads, and appropriate actions taken. When learners first arrive at Gretton, they will initially be placed on a transition plan. Some learners will be placed on an attendance plan, to continue to support them into full-time education, or to support those learners who have been highlighted in the weekly attendance meetings. Transition and attendance plans are reviewed regularly. Our aim is to increase attendance and ensure any issues relating to a learner's attendance are being addressed with appropriate strategies put in place.
- The Assistant Headteachers work in collaboration with Local Authorities to address any persistent attendance issues. Where appropriate, Local Authority Education Welfare Officers work closely with school staff to support families and resolve issues. The school also liaises closely with the SEN casework officer in issues relating to attendance as well as termly meetings with an Attendance Improvement Officer.

At Gretton, punctuality is modelled and expected. We encourage all learners to adhere to the time constraints of a timetable. We support all learners in developing an understanding of the passage of time and persistent lateness is addressed.

We are also aware that the majority of our learners are reliant on transport, which can affect their punctuality. We recognise this can be quite stressful for some of our learners, therefore we aim to report and follow up any transport issues that are brought to the school's attention.

If a learner's punctuality becomes a cause for concern, for other reasons unrelated to transport, the school's attendance procedure will be actioned within the weekly attendance meetings.

3 REQUESTS FOR TIME OFF DURING TERM TIME

Parents are discouraged from taking learners out of school during term time. In exceptional circumstances, parents can go through a formal process by writing to the Headteacher detailing their reasons for the request. This is then discussed at Senior Leadership level and the Headteacher provides feedback to parents, to inform whether the absence has been authorised.

4 FLOW CHART - TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

Learner attendance procedure - Traffic Light System

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Key Stage Leads review and monitor attendance weekly. If attendance drops below 95% over a span of 2 weeks (10 days) unless there has been a confirmed period of illness over the course of one week at any given time, the next steps are detailed below.

95% attendance and below	A call home to parents/ carers made by Class Staff. If ongoing concerns are raised due to unclear absence reasons, the Key Stage Lead will follow up with parents/ carers. Communication to be recorded on SchoolPod. Unless a learner is open to the Safeguarding Team in which case they will also be notified using MyConcern.
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90% attendance and below	A letter is sent to parents/carers by the Key Stage Lead, inviting them to a meeting to discuss strategies to support their child's attendance in school as well as to explore if an attendance plan is needed. The letter will be saved within the learners digital green file and any further communication to be recorded on SchoolPod. Unless a learner is open to the Safeguarding Team in which case they will also be notified using MyConcern.
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80% attendance and below	An attendance plan is put in place. The DSL/DDSL, Assistant Head (applicable to that Key Stage) are involved in supporting this alongside the Family Liaison Officer and the Local Authority are made aware, and parents/ carers update transport. Communication to be recorded on SchoolPod/MyConcern
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All attendance plans are monitored by the Key Stage Leads and identified to the DSL. All plans are reviewed regularly during attendance meetings, which the safeguarding team also attends.

If a learner is put on a temporary attendance plan, this must be authorised by the Assistant Head of that Key Stage/SENCO, who will inform the Local Authority.

The school may seek the support of an EWO to assist with re-integration of the learner back into school.

ANNEX A - ATTENDANCE LETTER 80-90%

Attendance Letter 80-90%

[Date]

Dear Parent/Carer,

You will have previously received communication from **[name's]** Form Tutor expressing some concerns about **[his/her]** attendance levels. In continuing to monitor this, we note that **[name's]** attendance is now at **[%]**.

Whilst we fully acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education and support for each child, **[name's]** attendance is a concern, as it will be having an inevitable impact on **[his/her]** education and overall wellbeing. We would like to help.

Learners' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment. As **[name]** has dropped to between 80-90%, we would like to invite you into school to discuss strategies to support and explore whether or not a possible attendance plan for the term ahead would be beneficial, outlining the areas of concern and the possible action for change to increase in school attendance.

[Name's] Form Tutor and I, as Key Stage Lead, will be present, with any confirmed strategies or attendance plan monitored by all those involved in order to support **[name]** back into school full time or to discuss some additional ways we can support if this is not possible at this time. I would be really grateful if you could please contact me to propose some suitable dates and times that would work for you and I look forward to your reply.

Regards

[Name]

[Key Stage Lead]