

# Promoting Attendance Policy



Session 2023-24



## Context

The impact of Covid cannot be underestimated and as such we believe that it is important that our attendance policy reflect the impact that the pandemic has had upon our school community. This refreshed policy has taken the views of staff, pupils, families as well as local and national guidance to best support the highest attendance possible for all pupils as we recover from the Covid Pandemic.

## Guiding Principles

We are *Ambitious*. This means that ...

In every action we aim to promote good attendance at school as we know that good attendance helps pupils achieve their very best. Absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning and reduces the ability of learners to be successful.

Studies have shown that attendance below 90% (four school weeks in a year) has a significant impact on pupil's achieving their best in school.

Universities, Colleges and Employers are less likely to accept someone who has attendance below 90%.

We are *Inclusive*. This means that ...

The foundation for our school is a focus on positive relationships and an inclusive ethos. Being in school regularly allows staff and pupils to build and strengthen these relationships. When pupils attend school, we know that they can access a range of supports to help them achieve in subject, develop their interpersonal skills and access supports for additional support needs. In response to the Pandemic and the rise of anxiety amongst our pupils we provide a counselling service 5 days a week.

Studies have shown that good attendance is a protective factor from poor wellbeing and reduces the chances of young people engaging in offending behaviour.

When discussing attendance with families it is important that we maintain a practical focus that recognises the challenges that can be part of family life, such as balancing work commitments; or dealing with financial challenges that may occur.

We are *Progressive*. This means that ...

We know early intervention around patterns of absence is very important and we value partnership working to catch attendance concerns early with families.

We encourage families to engage with us regularly to ensure we are aware of any challenges that families have. Our communication considers the differing needs families may have, such as those arising from a disability, or communication and language barriers. We ensure that where we know of these needs we will adapt our communication to suit individual circumstances.

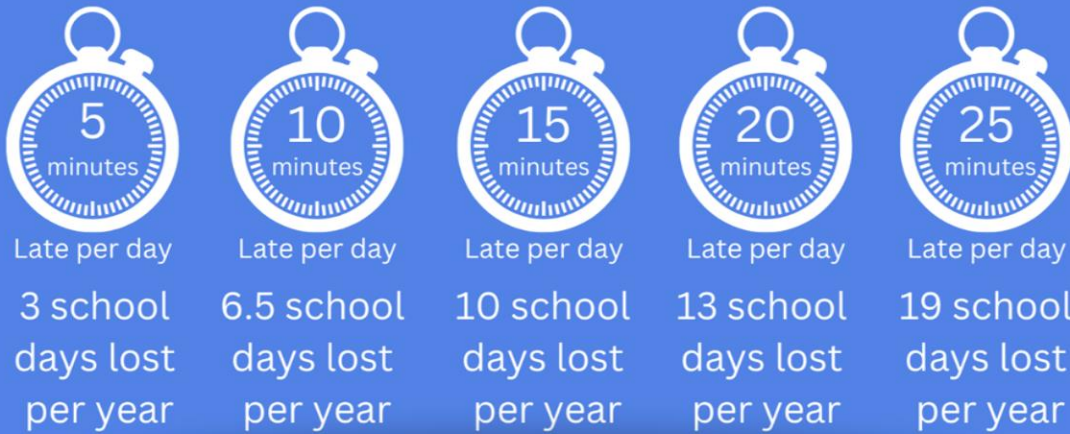
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**Did you know?**  
A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 94.7%

**Did you know?**  
If you are 15 minutes late each day you will have missed 2 full weeks of school in one year.

Good time keeping in Greenfaulds High School means ...  
... being in school, on time, every day, ready to learn.



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## **Family's role in encouraging good attendance**

*Parents have a legal responsibility to provide efficient education to their child until he or she reaches school leaving age, which they may meet by ensuring that their child attends school regularly.  
(Section 30 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980).*

Families have a lead role to play in promoting and supporting good attendance. All pupils should of course aim for 100% but our shared expectation is that pupils should maintain attendance of at least 95%.

We understand that the Covid Pandemic had a significant impact on society. Ensuring young people are attending school as much as possible helps to support their recovery.

Good communication is integral to partnership working. Families should ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details. We would also ask families to ensure that the school is contacted on first day of a pupil absence to ensure we have the most accurate details. Families can use the following communication channels to be in touch:

Phone: 01236 794876

Text: 07860030498

Email: [enquiries-at-greenfaulds@northlan.org.uk](mailto:enquiries-at-greenfaulds@northlan.org.uk)

If a young person starts to develop a pattern of absence, then it is important that families work alongside the school to resolve any issues and build positive and trusting relationships between the home and school.

Families will be kept up to date with levels of attendance through a monthly email update.

The first point of contact for families for absence related concerns is their young person's Principal Teacher of Pupil Support.

In the case of young people who are care experienced, their social worker should be copied into any communication relating to attendance.

We know that some parents and family members may have had their own negative experiences of school, which may lead to a lack of confidence and trust in the education system. We look to build relationships through regular contact, both informal and formal, and encourage families to see the school as a source of support and practical help.

Where concern about attendance is ongoing, home visits may help to build relationships between parents and the school. They can also help to consider whether the family has particular needs that they may not have shared with the school and consider whether support should be offered.

## **Attendance in school after reaching the school leaving age**

The expectation is that all pupils over the school leaving age maintain an attendance rate above 95%. Young people who choose to stay on at school beyond school leaving age, usually 16 years of age, and their families, are strongly encouraged to consider their continued commitment to good attendance. Where a pupils attendance falls below 90% a staged process will begin to support either improved attendance or a positive destination beyond school.

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## **The school's role in encouraging good attendance**

### *All staff will:*

- know the importance of good attendance at school and stress this in discussions with pupils and families.
- develop positive and trusting relationships with pupils.

### *Staff with a pastoral care responsibility will:*

- develop positive and trusting relationships with pupils and parents to prevent difficulties arising and to ensure difficulties are discussed and resolved when they do take place.
- be aware of individual circumstances where pupil's attendance is impacted by ill-health or other mitigating factors and ensure that these are not counted against a pupil's overall attendance level.
- ensure absence does not become a pattern or habit following a specific issue.
- be aware of early signs or concerns which may cause absence, to allow support plans to be arranged and adaptations and plans to be drawn up as appropriate.
- respond quickly to absence, to ensure children and young people are safe and well.
- follow up on absence, to enable the school and its partners to make an effective response.
- ensure that where there are young people who have separated parents/carers that both parties are kept up-to-date with all communications relating to attendance.
- support reintegration into learning on returning from absence this might take the form of a phased return or personalised timetable for a short period of time.

### *Subject teams will:*

- develop positive and trusting relationships with pupils.
- stress the importance of good attendance linking to positive outcomes in their subject area.
- be aware of early signs or concerns which may cause absence and raise these with their Principal Teacher and the pupil's Principal Teacher of Pupil Support.
- support a pupil's reintegration into learning after returning from absence by providing time and resources to allow the pupil to catch up on missed work within a realistic timeframe.
- ensure that where there are concerns around a particular pupil's absence rate, they are capturing evidence to support accreditation in their subject area as soon as the concern is raised.

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## Support for Pupil Concerns

In March 2023, all pupils were surveyed on the challenges that they faced regarding attending. The most common issues were around stress/anxiety and relationships with peers.

In response to this the school provides the following supports:

- Quiet areas of the school for break and lunchtime to support pupils who dislike crowds and noise associated with break and lunchtime.
- Stress management classes via Personal Social Education curriculum.
- Strong Pastoral support from Principal Teachers of Pupil Support.
- Where stress/anxiety is significant the school has a number of counsellors who are accessible to all pupils.
- The school website contains a range of Health & Wellbeing resources (including Solihull courses and CAMHS self help guides) which families can access through this link: [GHS Health & Wellbeing \(padlet.com\)](#)
- The school regularly reviews its anti-bullying policy. All members of our learning community are involved in these reviews to ensure that it is relevant and responsive.
- The school is relaunching its Mentors in Violence Prevention. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin all forms of gender-based violence or violence related to race, religion, sexual orientation, etc in our society. Young people are aware of biases that exist within society and develop leadership skills in order for them to employ 'active bystander' theory. Young people explore the scope of violence and are motivated in challenging victim blaming. The programme addresses a range of behaviours including physical violence, name-calling, sexting, coercive and controlling behaviour and harassment. Individuals are not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered onlookers with the ability to support and challenge their peers whilst keeping themselves safe.

## Recognising good attendance

In response to staff and pupil requests we will encourage pupils to aim for 100% attendance through the following steps:

Access to whole school events e.g. movie nights, shows, Christmas Dances and Prom will be open to all pupils who have attendance above 90%.

Involvement in school teams will require all team members to have attendance above 90%.

We will recognise pupils with attendance above 95% with additional trips/activities in June of each year.

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## **Working with families**

We recognise that families have a lead role to play in promoting and supporting good attendance. In order to support families in discussions around their child's attendance, we will provide a monthly summary of their child's attendance via email on the following dates.

Update 1	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> of September
Update 2	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> of October
Update 3	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> of November
Update 4	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> of December
Update 5	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> of January
Update 6	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> of February
Update 7	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> of March
Update 8	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> of April
Update 9	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> of May
Update 10	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> of June

## **Pupils with attendance between 90% and 75%**

Principal Teachers of Pupil Support will reach out to families whose child's attendance is between 90% and 75% to offer support and to agree the steps require to improve their attendance rate in school on the following dates.

Family Reach Out Offer 1	Week Beginning 9 <sup>th</sup> of October
Family Reach Out Offer 2	Week Beginning 4 <sup>th</sup> of December
Family Reach Out Offer 3	Week Beginning 19 <sup>th</sup> of February
Family Reach Out Offer 4	Week Beginning 29 <sup>th</sup> of April

## **Pupils with attendance between 75% and 50%**

Principal Teachers of Pupil Support will reach out to families whose child's attendance is between 75% and 50% to support the young person's reintegration into learning by providing time and resources to allow the pupil to catch up on missed work within a realistic timeframe. Furthermore, they will also work to ensure that they are capturing evidence to support accreditation in their subject areas.

## **Pupils with attendance less than 50%**

Principal Teachers of Pupil Support will reach out to families to arrange a Team Around the Child Meeting to identify barriers to attendance as well as creating an individualised package to improve attendance levels and to capture evidence to support accreditation in subject areas.

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