



GRIMSBY INSTITUTE GROUP

Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive full time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. Parents/carers have the responsibility for making sure their children attend The Academy Grimsby (the Academy) regularly and on time.

This policy reflects the amendments that have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 which came into force on 1st September 2013.

The amendments make it clear that leave of absence during term time may not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any request on the basis of exceptional circumstance will be considered on an individual basis and must be applied for in writing as soon as possible in advance of absence.

In the case of a long term absence, which may be due to illness, family bereavement, breakdown in the family unit etc, will be supported by the Academy. In such instances work will be provided for the duration and an integration programme where required.

2. Aim:

This policy is designed to provide a framework to:

- Support student retention and achievement by raising standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Safeguard students by monitoring attendance and patterns of absence.
- Ensure a consistency of approach to attendance and punctuality across the Grimsby Institute Group (GIG).

This policy aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance which will:

- enhance their learning experience,
- develop their personal skills; and
- promote positive retention, achievement and progression.

3. Principles on which the policy is based:

There are four principles underpinning The Academy Grimsby's (the Academy) approach to student attendance:

- Student attendance should be effectively managed across the GIG;

- Targets for student attendance should be set and monitored centrally; the target for attendance is 100%. Punctuality and full attendance should be one key benchmark by which the quality of provision is judged;
- Every effort should be made to maximise punctuality and attendance, and remove the barriers that prevent it. Actions to support improvement will recognise and reward those students with excellent attendance and take appropriate action against those whose attendance or punctuality is poor.
- If any student's attendance falls below 85% this may affect progression, being the equivalent of 6 weeks lost learning.

4. Managing Attendance

This policy applies to all students at the Academy. The Academy's attendance policy is managed by the Academy Head

Students are entitled to the best opportunities to be successful in their studies and full attendance is known to be a key factor in success. If a student's attendance and punctuality give the Academy cause for concern discussions will take place between the student and the Personal Tutor to identify any difficulties and provide any appropriate support to improve parents/carers will also be encouraged to attend meetings regarding attendance to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach.

The Academy Head will provide parents/carers of new students with information about the legal requirements relating to the education of their children and guidelines on how they can support their children in the Academy.

The tutor/mentor will inform parents/carers when a concern has arisen about attendance. Reports of any contact between the tutor/mentor and parents/carers will be given to the Academy Head.

The tutor/mentor will make parents/carers aware when awards are given for good and improved attendance. The tutor/mentor will contact the families of students whose attendance has been a cause for concern when they are making improvement.

Tutors will make reference to attendance in any reports or records that are sent home and parent/carer evenings.

5. Expectations

The Academy is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all students.

The Academy endeavours to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of attendance is paramount. The Academy will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Any absence below 100% can be detrimental to learning which increases with the amount of days lost. (Appendix 4 sets out in detail the attendance percentage and equivalent days lost.) Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Attendance is subject to various education laws and this Academy's attendance policy is written to reflect these laws.

Each year the Academy will examine its attendance figures and set attendance and absence targets. These will take account both national attendance targets. The Academy will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

It is essential that:

- Students are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Attendance targets are set for individual students and year groups.
- Parents/carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised.
- Student attendance and lateness are monitored regularly.
- Academy attendance statistics are reported.
- The Academy issues a Penalty Notice for any holidays taken in term time

Students should be encouraged to:

- Attend the Academy regularly and on time.
- Inform their personal tutor if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

Parents are expected to:

- Encourage full attendance.
- Inform the Academy via telephone on each day of every absence before 8:45 and the reason for absence
- Discuss planned absences with the Academy in advance (e.g. family holidays, special occasions) taking on board the Academy ethics around not authorising holidays during term time.
- Make sure any appointments are made out of school hours.
- Never take holidays in term time

The Senior Management Team have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the attendance policy and procedures
- Monitor all attendance data

6. Procedures

Tutors are responsible for registering their groups twice daily.

Any student who is absent from the Academy at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. A Head of House or a member of SMT can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. (See Appendix 1 for definitions)

Morning registration will take place at the start of the day at (8.30am). The registers will remain open until (8.45am). After this time, students will be marked with a U, which means that students have an absent mark for the entire AM period. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered (as long as medical evidence can be provided). See Appendix 2 for Definitions of Absence and Attendance Codes.

The afternoon registration will be at (2.00pm)

The registers will close at (2.15pm)

Learners arriving after the start of the day but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

In the event of a learner being absent from the Academy and no reason being given, the tutor/mentor will contact the learner's parent/carer and a record of the call will be recorded and kept on file.

After 6 sessions (1 session being equivalent to a half day) of unauthorised absences a letter will be sent to parents/carers inviting them in to discuss issues surrounding attendance and to offer support if needed.

If further problems persist the parent/carer will receive a letter after 12 sessions (6 days) persistent absences and will be required to attend a School Attendance Panel (SAP) and if the unauthorised attendance reaches a level of 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence in 14 weeks a formal written notification to each parent that they will receive a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued. A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued if there is unauthorised absence during the following 15 day period, such notice to be issued by the Education Welfare Service (EWS). This is as set out in the North East Lincolnshire Council

Local Protocol and Code of Conduct which is available on the local authority website, a summary of which can be found at Appendix 3. The EWS may carry out legal proceedings against the carers or parents through a Local Attendance Panel (LAP) process.

It is important that on return from an absence that all learners are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed on to the other students.

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be recorded and kept on file for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the learner, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

The Academy will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

7. Rewards and special initiatives

The Academy has a rewards system in place for good attendance. At the end of every term an attendance certificate is sent home. Students who have achieved 100% attendance will receive a certificate to place in their Progress File.

Students who achieve 100% attendance for the whole year will receive a voucher as well as a certificate.

8. Related policies

- The Home/Academy Agreement
- Behaviour Policy

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

A senior member of the Academy staff will be identified to lead on the implementation of the policy. This individual will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures and where necessary, make recommendations to the Group Senior Management Team for improvement

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes

Appendix 3 – Local Authority Code of Conduct Summary and Fixed Penalty Notices

Appendix 4 – Attendance % and Days Lost

Appendix 1

Definitions

Parent/carer:

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' to include:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Each 'parent' has the responsibility of ensuring the child or young person's school attendance.

You are a carer if a child or young person lives with you and you are: a step-parent; a partner living in the home; a grandparent; an auntie; an adult sister; a friend; a boyfriend.

Authorised absence:

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the Academy has received notification from a parent/carer. Only school can make an absence authorised. Parent/carers do not have this authority.

Unauthorised absence:

Learners where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

Approved Educational Activity:

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the Academy

Exceptional Circumstances include;

- Service Personnel parents restricted due to work
- Acute Crisis
- Court Order or separation agreement.

Evidence of the above will be required for the Academy Head to authorise.

Appendix 2

Attendance Codes

Code H: Family Holiday (agreed)

The amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make clear that the Academy Head may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Academy Head should determine the number of school days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Any request for holiday absence will be considered individually, taking account of the age of the student: the time of year proposed for the trip; its nature and parental/carer wishes; the overall attendance pattern of the student; the student's stage of education and progress. Parents/carers will fill out an application for leave of absence, which the Academy will consider. The Academy may then invite parents/carers into school to discuss any proposed holiday in term time.

The Academy may delete from roll a student who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.

The Academy will not agree absences of more than 10 school days in a school year.

A student who is authorised to take up to 10 days holiday during one whole academic year will only attain 94.7% attendance.

A student who is authorised to take 10 days holiday during the period of September – May (the annual DfE absence survey time period) will only attain 93.8%. These are the figures that appear in the performance tables.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental etc appointments)

Missing registration through illness is an authorised absence. If a student is present for registration but returns home because of illness, no absence is recorded for that session. The Academy will keep a record of students leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency.

If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, the Academy may record the absence as unauthorised absence (Code O) and will advise parents/carers of this. The Academy can and may request parents/carers to provide medical evidence to support absence on the grounds of illness.

This code will be used when parents/carers phone to say that their child is ill. Parents/carers will always be advised to notify the Academy as soon as possible on the first day of absence when a child is ill and whenever possible before 8.45 am.

While the Academy can request medical evidence to support absence on the grounds of illness, the Academy will not request medical certificates unnecessarily (particularly retrospective certificates), especially if the illness was not treated by a doctor at the time.

Code M: Medical/Dental appointments

Parents/carers and students will be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. If a student is absent from registration due to attending an early morning medical appointment the Academy will ask for sight of an appointment card.

If a student is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, no absence will be recorded for that session. The Academy will keep a record of students leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency.

A student receiving medical treatment on site will be marked 'present'.

Medical appointments include

- Attendance at a GP surgery
- Attendance at a dentist's surgery
- Hospital appointments (not a stay in hospital).

Code R: Religious observance

Absence for when a student wishes to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong, including religious festivals. Parents/carers will be required to give advance notice by letter.

Code E: Excluded (no alternative provision made)

A student who is excluded for a fixed period remains on the Academy roll but cannot attend the school.

Alternative provision should be arranged for that student but, if it is not, the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from decisions made by the Academy.

Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded student for whom alternative provision is not made should be treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. The student's name should be removed from the Academy roll on the Academy day either:

- After the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion.
- On expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made.
- If the student takes up a place elsewhere.

The Academy is responsible for making alternative arrangements for an excluded student who remains on the Academy roll either directly or in conjunction with an agreed provider of alternative provision.

Code C: Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)

Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. School will consider each request individually taking the following into account:

- The nature of the event
- Its frequency (is it a one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?)
- Did the parent/carer give advance notice
- The student's overall attendance pattern i.e. below 90%

Examples might include special occasions such as attending the wedding of a family member, family bereavement, prison visits.

Young Carers

In a genuine crisis, a school can approve absence for a student to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made. The Academy should set a time limit for the absence and set some schoolwork so the student does not fall far behind while at home.

At the request of the Academy a student may be placed on an agreed part-time timetable as part of reintegration.

Approved educational activity

Code B: Educated off site

Examples of when this code would be used are:

- Attending taster days at other schools
- Students attending another school as 'guest learners'

The Academy will ensure that we have in place, arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity provided "off-site" can notify the Academy of any absences by individual students, so that the Academy can record the student absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)

This code is to be used when a student is dually registered at two schools and, for the session in question, they are not required to attend the Academy.

The Academy, where the student is expected to attend, is responsible for accurately recording the student's attendance and chasing up non-attendance.

If the alternative provision made is attendance at a PRU, the student will be recorded under Code D as the student is, in effect, dually registered at both institutions. In these circumstances, the student's status as recorded in the Studio MIS system changes from Current single registration (C) to Current main (Dual registration) (M).

Students who are dually registered at two schools will be registered as such in both school's information management systems (MIS) under "pupil enrolment status". For example – A student who is on roll at school A but attending school B (which could be the PRU or a special school).

School A – record M (Main – dual registration)

School B – record S (Subsidiary – dual registration)

The Academy will ensure that they have in place, arrangements whereby the Academy where the student is scheduled to be can notify the "other" school of any absences by individual learners so that both schools can record the student absence using the relevant absence code.

Code P: Approved sporting activity

The student is participating in, or attending, an approved sporting activity. The activity is when supervised by a person authorised by the Academy.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This is for Academy organised trips and visits, including residential trips. It will also be used for other trips of a strictly educational nature, which are arranged by other organisations, provided they are supervised.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is unauthorised if a student is absent without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

Code G: Family Holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement)

If the Academy does not agree absence and the student goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised (Code G). If parents/carers keep a student away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised (Code G).

Penalty Notices may be issued:

- If parents/carers have not sought permission from the Academy Head before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term-time;
- If the Academy Head has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway;
- If a student has not returned to the Academy by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation and the student remains on the roll of the Academy. (Penalty Notices cannot be issued when a student has been removed from roll).

AND

- Where the absence has been recorded by the Academy as unauthorised in the attendance register on at least 10 sessions (5 school days).

- Penalty Notices will not be issued for term-time holiday with less than 5 days (10 sessions) unauthorised absence.
- Penalty Notices cannot be issued if the parents/carers are known to be out of the country.
- Penalty Notices cannot be issued against the parents/carers of children who are not of statutory school age.

Code U: Late (after registration closed)

This code will be used when a student has arrived after the close of registration with no relevant reason to code it otherwise. If a student arrives late without a valid reason Code U will be used.

Code L will be used for students who are late before registers close (but are not marked as absent). The Academy will actively discourage late arrivals and will be alert to patterns of late arrival, which could provide grounds of prosecution. Registers will be kept open until 8.45 am.

Code O: Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)

- Official examination and Statutory Assessment periods.
- First full half term (September – October)
- Student's/parent's/carer's/sibling's birthday
- Parent's/carer's/sibling's appointments
- Shopping
- Hair cut
- "Couldn't get up"
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- Long weekends
- More than 1 holiday request in each school year

Public Performances

Where a student is absent because they are taking part in a public performance, it is still the Academy which decides whether to authorise the absence, even if the student is being employed under a license issued by a local authority.

Code N: No reason yet provided for absence

The Academy will make every endeavour to establish the reason for a student's absence. Until a reason is obtained, the absence will be coded using code N. If no reason for absence is provided after 1 week, Code O will be recorded.

The Academy will have a system in place to follow up any absences and establish the reason for them in liaison with class staff.

Repeated Unauthorised Absences

The Academy will monitor and contact the parent/carers of any student who has an unauthorised absence. If a student has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parent/carer will be asked to visit the Academy and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the Academy will then contact the Education Social Work support services, who will undertake a monitoring process, in order to improve the student's attendance and ensure that parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

The Senior Management Team, supported by the Education Social Worker, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Long Term Absence

If a student's absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the Academy will endeavour to support the student by providing activities to do at home.

Appendix 3 – Local Authority Code of Conduct Summary and Fixed Penalty Notices

School Attendance Legislation:

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory education age receive efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school, alternative provision or by education otherwise.

If it appears to the Local Authority that a child of compulsory education age is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, then under section 437 of the Education Act 1996, they must begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order.

If a child of compulsory education age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered or at alternative provision made for them then the parent may be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Under section 447 of the Education Act 1996 a Local Authority must consider applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) under section 36 of the Children Act 1989 before prosecuting a parent under section 444 of the Act. A Local Authority may apply for an ESO instead of or as well as prosecuting the parent.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

The Local Authority has primary responsibility for developing, overseeing and administering this Code of Conduct. Within the Local Authority, the Education Welfare Service has operational responsibility for the application of this Code of Conduct.

Parents and pupils are supported at school and by Local Authority officers to overcome issues that prevent regular school attendance through a wide range of intervention strategies. Where this intervention fails penalty notices are an appropriate means to get pupils back into school or alternative education where a parent is judged capable of securing their child's attendance but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so. They are also an appropriate sanction for a parent who has failed to ensure their child is not found in a public place while excluded. Circumstances in which a penalty notice might be issued are:

- Irregular school attendance;
- Overt truancy;
- Parentally-condoned absences;
- Unauthorised holidays in term-time;
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed);
- Being in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion; and
- Delayed return to school following a fixed term exclusion

Penalty notices will only be issued for offences where the Local Authority is willing and able to prosecute.

Use of penalty notices will be restricted to two per pupil per academic year. In cases where families contain more than one poor attending pupil, multiple issues may occur. However, this will be subject to careful consideration and co-ordination. A penalty notice may be issued to each parent liable for the offence.

A threshold of at least 20 sessions (10 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the last 14 weeks will apply to parentally condoned absences.

There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent may receive a formal written warning of the possible issue of a penalty notice, and where unauthorised absences occur following the successful completion of the 15-day attendance period by a pupil, a further written warning will be issued. Non-compliance with that further written warning may result in the issue of a penalty notice.

In accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools can only authorise up to 10 days (20 sessions) in any one academic year for the purpose of leave of absence for holidays in term time, if the Academy Head considers that there are **special circumstances** relating to that application. The Academy Head cannot authorise more than 10 days (20 sessions) save in **exceptional circumstances**. If the Academy Head is satisfied that there is a **special reason**, then and only then, should they proceed to consider whether the absence should be authorised, giving proper consideration to SATS, external and internal assessments and the attendance record of the pupil concerned. The Local Authority has no power to authorise or unauthorise leave of absence.

Requests for a holiday in term time should only be made if there are **special/exceptional circumstances** as to why the holiday cannot be taken at any time outside of term time. These circumstances must be detailed on the application form obtained from the school prior to the holiday, as retrospective consent will not be given. Evidence in support of these circumstances must also be provided to the school when the application form is submitted. For example, written confirmation from an employer why the holiday cannot be taken during any of the various school holidays or a Doctor's/Health Professional's certificate in support of a family crisis/serious illness.

To ensure the consistent application of the penalty notice provisions, penalty notices will ordinarily be issued where the following criteria are met:

- Where there are at least 10 sessions (5 school days) recorded as unauthorised absence due to a holiday in term-time; or
- Where a child has at least 20 sessions (10 school days) recorded as unauthorised absence during the previous 14 weeks and the pupil has failed a 15-day warning period; or
- Where a child who has been excluded is present in a public place during the first five days without reasonable justification.

Protocol for Issuing Penalty Notices:

Penalty notices will only be issued within the terms of the Code of Conduct. The Education Welfare Service is responsible for the administration and issue of penalty

notices in the area of North East Lincolnshire.

Payment of Penalty Notices:

Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. Payment of a penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt of the notice. If the penalty notice is not paid in full by the end of the 42-day period, the Local Authority must either prosecute under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice. Where a penalty notice is withdrawn the recipient must be informed in writing

Appendix 4

For a generally healthy student, the following would apply:

	% Attendance	Days Lost	
OUTSTANDING	100	0	
	99	2	
GOOD	98	4	
	97	6	
SATISFACTORY	96	8	
	95	10	2 SCHOOL WEEKS of Lost Learning
UNSATISFACTORY	94	12	
	93	14	
	92	16	
	91	18	
	90	20	4 SCHOOL WEEKS of Lost Learning
	89	22	
	88	24	
	87	26	
TOTALLY	86	28	
UNACCEPTABLE	85	30	
	84	32	
	83	34	
	82	36	
	81	38	
	80	40	1 (8WK) HALF TERM of Lost Learning
	79	42	
	78	44	
	77	46	
	76	48	
NEGLECT	75	50	
	74	52	
	73	54	
	72	56	
	71	58	
	70	60	1 (12WK) TERM of Lost Learning