

**GROSVENOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL
PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

1. INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential. Grosvenor Grammar School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

This is in line with the School's mission statement:

To inspire our pupils within a supportive, caring environment to be lifelong learners, enabling all pupils to realise their full potential and become tolerant and confident adults.

This policy is written within the context of *Miss School=Miss Out: A strategy for improving Pupil Attendance* published by the Department of Education (December 2016) and within the context of published DE Circulars.

2 AIMS

- 2.1 To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Grosvenor Grammar School.
- 2.2 To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- 2.3 To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
- 2.4 To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

3 ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

- 3.1 The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance.
- 3.2 A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for managing this policy and monitoring attendance levels in the school.
The Heads of Year are responsible for monitoring the attendance levels for their Year Group and addressing any issues as they arise.
- 3.3 Form Tutors regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning registration sessions and discussing reasons for absence with pupils. Class teachers record attendance for the afternoon registration session. A member of the Office Staff is responsible for producing relevant attendance reports.
- 3.4 The Board of Governors provides support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensures it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.
- 3.5 To enable the school to record accurately and monitor attendance in a consistent way, the guidance provided in the most recent Department of Education Circular will be followed.

4 ROLE OF PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

- 4.1 Grosvenor Grammar School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.
- 4.2 Parents/guardians have a legal duty (Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986) to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient, full-time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.
- 4.3 If a child is registered in school, their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.
- 4.4 It is a parent's/guardian's responsibility to inform the School of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. This should be confirmed by email to ggsabsence217@c2ken.net when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.
- 4.5 Pupils are expected to be in school for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on their child's attendance record.
- 4.6 Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school immediately if they are concerned their child appears reluctant to attend school. The matter should be raised with the Form Tutor or Head of Year and the School will ensure that the parents and their child receive maximum support.

5 ROLE OF PUPILS

- 5.1 Each pupil at Grosvenor Grammar School must attend school punctually and regularly. If they are absent from school, an email from a parent/guardian must be sent to ggsabsence217@c2ken.net upon their return.

6 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

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- 6.1 If a pupil does not attend Registration Class, their absence will be noted by their Form Tutor on SIMS Lesson Monitor (code N).
- 6.2 If the pupil is late to registration, they sign the late book at reception upon their arrival into school. Their lateness will be recorded by the Office Staff in SIMS Lesson Monitor (code L).
- 6.3 Where possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours. If a parent wishes to request absence for their child for a medical/dental appointment, they should make the request in writing to the Head of Year/Form Tutor, who will provide the pupil with a permission slip which they show to their teacher when they leave class. The pupil is then required to sign out of school at Reception and hand in their permission slip. Their absence will be noted in SIMS Lesson Monitor by the Office staff (code M).
- 6.4 When a pupil returns to school after a period of absence, parents/guardians are required to send an email to ggsabsence217@c2ken.net which states the name of the pupil, the dates of absence and the reason for their child's absence. On receipt of the email, a member of the Office Staff will update SIMS Lesson Monitor with the correct code.

7 FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

- 7.1 Grosvenor Grammar School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a family holiday be authorised.
- 7.2 Parents/guardians must make a formal request in writing to the Principal to request absence for their child due to a family holiday in advance of the absence period. The Principal's decision will be made in accordance with DENI guidance and regulations.

8 PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING NON-ATTENDANCE

- 8.1 If parent(s)/guardian(s) have not emailed ggsabsence217@c2ken.net within 5 days of the pupil's return to school, a member of the Office Staff will send an absence notification via email to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 8.2 The Head of Year will monitor the long-term absence of pupils in their Year Group and will contact parents either by telephone or in writing to ascertain or confirm reasons for absence.
- 8.3 Pupils whose attendance figures fall below 85% will be referred to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) if appropriate (see below).

9 EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

- 9.1 The Education Authority (EA) through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) has a legal duty to make sure that parents/guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.
- 9.2 If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85%, they will be referred to the EWS, if appropriate. The EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.
- 9.3 The member of the Senior Leadership Team i/c of attendance meets with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) on a regular basis to review those pupils whose attendance has fallen below 85%.