

# Great Barr School Attendance Policy

## Section 1. Statutory Responsibility for Attendance

### 1.1 Legal Framework

Successive Education Acts and regulations set the legal framework governing school attendance. Schools must adhere to this legislation and ensure they follow the Education Pupil Registration England Regulations (DCSF 2006)

In summary, there are legal obligations on:

- The **parent** to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The **School** to register pupil admissions, removals and pupil attendance and to notify the Local Education Authority (Education Welfare Service) of instances where absence from school is a cause for concern requiring investigation by the EWS.
- The **Local Authority** to provide suitable education provision, and to regularly inspect school registers and where necessary enforce attendance through the resource of the Education Welfare Service.

### 1.2 Introduction

*Non-attendance at school for any reason is an important issue that must be treated promptly and seriously. Every case is different and there is no standard path that can be followed in applying intervention strategies. In all cases of non-attendance it is essential that early action is taken.*

*'Ensuring Children's Right to Education' DSCF 2008*

The Governors, Head teacher and staff of School acknowledge that there is a strong correlation between high attendance and high attainment. Good attendance is crucial if pupils are to achieve their full potential at school. Attendance is an important indicator of the success of other school procedures and policies such as the SEN policy, pastoral system, curriculum provision and curriculum development, behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

- Child Protection Policy
- "Improving and Maintaining Pupil Attendance" (Education Welfare Service (EWS))
- Extended Leave and Absence During Term Time (Education Welfare Service 2008)
- Education Pupil Registration England Regulations, (DCSF 2006)
- Ensuring Children's Right to Education 2008 (DCSF 2008)
- Legal Framework (see 1.4)

All of the above are available on the Attendance site on BGFL <http://services.bgfl.org/services/attend/default.htm> then click on IMPA (improving and maintaining pupil attendance).

*'The issues behind non-attendance may be complex, and the type of intervention required will depend on each individual case and an external agency assessment may be appropriate. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) provides an appropriate framework for identifying the issues'*

*'Ensuring Children's Right to Education' DSCF 2008*

### **Aims of this policy**

- To Safeguard pupils and ensure they receive their right to education.
- To improve and maintain levels of attendance consistent with established targets.
- To ensure that there is common and consistent practice amongst staff.
- To raise parents and pupils awareness of the importance of good attendance and of the impact attendance has upon achievement.
- To have a system of incentives and rewards which encourage individual pupils, and whole classes, to attend regularly.
- To ensure that pupils are not removed from roll other than within the safeguarding procedures set out by the local authority.

**1.3** *GREAT BARR SCHOOL is a purpose built 11-18 Comprehensive School that accommodates approximately 2400 students. The school is well equipped with excellent facilities, large playing fields and classrooms connected to an extensive computer network.*

*The School serves a student community where approximately 75% of pupils come from the local area, also meeting the education needs of many students who travel from areas throughout Birmingham. Around 35% of students come from ethnic minorities and a higher than average proportion of the students are entitled to free school meals. In addition to local levels of high economic deprivation, attainment on entry to school is below average, with some students arriving with considerable literacy difficulties.*

*The school aims to provide the kind of education best suited to each child, to enable them to make the most of their abilities and to develop their interests as widely as possible. It also aims to prepare students to play a useful role in society, and to develop positive attitudes towards other people and the environment.*

### **1.4. Deletions from the Registers (Pupils being removed from school roll)**

*(This is taken from Education Pupil Registration England Regulations, DCSF 2006)*

The regulations enable schools to delete compulsory school-age children **ONLY** in the following circumstances:

- the school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order;
- the School Attendance Order is revoked by the Local Authority;
- completion of compulsory school age education;
- permanent exclusion;
- death of the pupil;
- transfer between schools; and

- pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system.
- failure to return for an extended family holiday after both the school and the Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil;
- a medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age;
- in custody for more than four months;
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil;
- left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.

**The SCHOOL WILL NOT** remove a pupil from roll where there is no known destination without consultation with the EWS.

Registration Regulations state that a pupil's attendance begins on the first expected day after registering at the school. If they do not attend on that first day it is an absence, unless the family and school agree a new expected start date.

### **1.5 Persistence Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling at any time within the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is most likely to cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to minimise absence from school.

We will monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that level will be given priority and parents will be advised immediately in writing. (*Refer to Appendix A letter and Appendix B Wise Up letter*)

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic, GSU or tutor mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Individual Attendance Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, Education Social Worker, or use of in-school pastoral support, individual incentive programmes and/or participation in group activities around raising attendance (we work closely with the YIP workers to encourage good attendance). All PA cases are automatically referred for consultation with the Education Welfare Service.

### **1.6 Every Child Matters & Safeguarding**

Attendance is a key factor in attainment, safeguarding and the outcomes for Every Child Matters. The school is the place where pupils spend a large amount of their time and overcoming barriers to learning is one of the key focuses for a school.

### **1.7 Holidays/leave in term time & extended leave**

The Government, Local Authority, and schools actively discourage parents / carers from taking children on holidays or trips during school term time. Parents and carers who do so are challenged and where the holiday / trip is not authorised by the Head Teacher the issuing of Penalty Notices and court action are considered. (Please see specific guidance for this from the policy on BGFL).

## **1.8 Forced Marriage & Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

We are increasingly aware of girls and young women being forced into marriage and or undergoing FGM. School staff need to be aware of the possibility that holiday/leave (either in or out of school time), may be for the purpose of forced marriage and or FGM. We also recognise that boys and young men can be forced into marriage. For further support with this please contact

FGM Debbie Tillsley in Equality & Diversity 464 6100

Forced Marriage Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151 [www.foc.gov/forcedmarriage](http://www.foc.gov/forcedmarriage)

## **1.9 Rights Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1.9.1 The Parent / Carer has a responsibility to:**

- Ensure regular attendance of children of compulsory school age registered at School.
- Promote a good attitude to learning, by ensuring that any child in their care arrives at school punctually, in appropriate dress and willing to work to fulfil the expectations of the school with regard to rules and behaviour, learning and homework.
- Work in partnership with school and other agencies in the best interests of their child: this includes informing school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning and attendance.

### **1.9.2 Responsibilities of School**

The School's Governors, Head Teacher and Leadership Team have a responsibility to ensure that all staff work in partnership to support the School to fulfil its duties and responsibilities in relation to attendance in the following ways:

- Provide an education suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children
- Work collaboratively together and with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding, for example, Child Protection, Child Employment, Youth Offending and Connexions.

### **1.9.3 Governing Body**

1. The Governing Body will be responsible for ensuring that the school and staff meet legal responsibilities in relation to all Pupil Attendance and Registration Regulations.

2. They will draw up an Admission Policy for the school and ensure that all Admission Procedures are correctly followed.
3. They will publish a School Prospectus and related documents that will give clear statements of the value placed on high levels of attendance and of the school's expectations in this respect.
4. They will be involved in the development and agreement of this policy, including the monitoring of attendance data at least termly.
5. They will ensure that the school is able to provide the necessary resources for the implementation of this policy.

#### **1.9.4 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible to the Governing Body for ensuring that the school staff carry out their responsibilities for the day-to-day management of attendance matters within the school.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Meeting with the school Educational Social Worker & the Designated Senior Attendance Lead (D.S.A.L) to create the Individual School Action Plan (ISAP)
- Ensuring that the D.S.A.L is a member of the Senior Management Team.
- The D.S.A.L attending appropriate training. Administration staff can attend D.S.A.L training in addition to the D.S.A.L, but not instead of
- Communicating information about attendance to governors, staff, parents and the community.
- Identifying resources to support staff development and training. Informing staff that it is an offence not to maintain accurate registers.
- Pupil incentive schemes and other initiatives in relation to attendance.
- Supporting staff in the development of initiatives to improve whole school attendance.
- Assessing requests for holiday and extended holidays in school time under exceptional circumstances.
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**Most of these roles and responsibilities are delegated to the schools D.S.A.L (Pastoral Deputy) and the Head of House with whole school responsibility for attendance.**

#### **1.9.5 Registration Tutors / Class Teachers**

Registration Tutors and Class Teachers will ensure that they follow all procedures related to the recording, reporting and monitoring of pupil attendance as outlined in this policy, taking into account the Ensuring Children's Right to Education DCSF 2008, in relation to registration regulations. Particular attention should be noted of the following changes;

- Expected first day of attendance
- Attendance Register
- Holidays in term time

The Registration Tutor/Class Teacher will play a key role in all matters related to attendance and it will be through them and the relationships they build with pupils and parents that many aspects of improving and monitoring attendance will be achieved most effectively.

Tutors and class teachers will:

- Monitor individual attendance progress, behaviour and achievements.
- Work towards the development of trusting and continuing relationships with pupils.
- Be trained in the use of electronic systems (and manual registration for supply staff and when e-portal is not operating).
- Take am registers in tutor time and pm registers in subject groups.
- Positively support reward systems for good attendance, progress, behaviour and achievement.
- Provide appropriate support when pupils return after longer absences with guidance and support from the pastoral teams.
- Liaise with parents, pastoral and GSU staff plus the Education Social Worker and any agencies as may be necessary.

*(Please insert additional responsibilities for teachers and name any others in your school who have responsibility for attendance) – see handbooks attached*