

Aim

To raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the college

Rationale

Full attendance is essential if our students are to maximise their full educational potential. Long term research shows that a 10% fall in attendance can result in a fall in achievement of one grade or one level e.g.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to the loss of one grade and having half a day off each week
 - 80% attendance is equivalent to the loss of two grades and having one day off each week
- As well as lowering student grades, poor attendance may reduce employment prospects

We aim to achieve the best attendance possible for each of our students. **Any absence** gives cause for concern and speedy action is essential in preventing absence from possibly becoming a persistent problem.

The purpose of the college attendance policy is to:

- Have clear procedures for the College to monitor the attendance of students and to enable the College to set targets for improved attendance
- State to parents their legal responsibility, relating to college attendance and punctuality, and to work with parents and students to improve individual attendance levels
- Set out the working arrangements with supporting services

Policy Statement

Through the implementation of the Attendance Policy at Groby Community College we aim to achieve optimum attendance by:

- Taking prompt and accurate registers at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon
- Taking prompt and accurate registers in every lesson to monitor attendance and punctuality
- Monitoring and analysing cumulative attendance data
- Setting group, college and individual targets where appropriate
- Celebrating individual and House attendance

Students, parents and guardians are informed about attendance issues through :

- Information posted on the college website or included in the newsletters
 - . Attendance data being included in interim and full reports
 - . Parental on-line access to up to date attendance data on SIMS
 - . Involvement of the Attendance Support Officer in supporting students and families with individual attendance problems.

Staff at Groby Community College implement agreed procedures by:

- . Promoting high expectations of attendance and punctuality for all students, by setting an example themselves
- . Challenging lateness to college/ lessons and issuing sanctions in line with our behaviour management policy
- . Challenging students about unexplained absences
- . Tutors/teachers informing the Student Wellbeing team, as necessary and as soon as possible, of concerns regarding attendance / welfare
- . The Student Wellbeing team discussing students with attendance issues at their weekly meetings
- . The Attendance Support Officer/Heads of House addressing issues with individual students and parents

Effective working relationship with support agencies exist by:

- . Working closely with attendance teams in feeder high schools
- . Sharing good practice re attendance procedures at network meetings attended by the Assistant Principal i/c Student Wellbeing (strategic) and the Attendance Support Officer (operational)
- . Discussing students with attendance issues at the weekly Student Wellbeing team meeting
- . Heads of House working, when required, with representatives from Police, Social Care, Health Services and the Attendance Support Officer to promote work with inter-agency support for individual students.
- . The Attendance Support Officer working with the Leicestershire County Council legal team

Policy Intentions

This policy is available to:

- . Parents
- . Governors
- . College staff
- . Students
- . External monitoring agencies, eg HMI
- . The Local Authority

The Policy will be regularly reviewed and evaluated by the Attendance Support Officer, SLT and Governors

Appendices

The following Appendices support and develop this policy statement:

- Appendix A The legal situation regarding attendance
- Appendix B SIMS / Lesson Monitor Registration Procedures
- Appendix C Attendance Codes to be used and their meaning
- Appendix D : Overview of roles and responsibilities

Review Date:

Reviewed By: Governor Student Wellbeing Committee

Date to be Reviewed:

Appendix A : The legal situation regarding attendance

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Any absence should be considered unauthorised unless there is a valid reason otherwise. Unauthorised absence at any level is considered unacceptable by both the college and local authority.

DfE Guidance on leave during term time – June 2013, implemented September 2013

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 remove reference to 'Family Holidays' and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **There is no automatic right to any holiday in term time.**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Such permission is granted in accordance with arrangements made by the governing body of the school. Leave of absence must be requested from and agreed by the Headteacher in advance of any absence. If approved, the absence is registered as authorised and if not approved but still taken, as unauthorised.

The DfE guidance about holidays in term time makes the following points:

- each request can only be judged on a case by case basis;
- even in exceptional circumstances it is expected that Headteachers will use their discretion sparingly;
- Headteachers should not apply policies (for example, blanket bans) which might suggest that each application has not been considered on its individual merits;
- as a general guide any activity, holiday or event that can be arranged during the annual 13 week holiday time should not be authorised during the school term.

Penalties for unauthorised absence

Amendments have been made to the 2007 penalty notices regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on **1 September 2013**.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure that his/her children's regular attendance at school. The penalty is £60 for those who pay within 28 days and £120 for those who pay within 42 days. Parents who do not pay a fine within 42 days may be prosecuted.

Groby Community College will follow the Leicestershire Code of Conduct (revised August 2013) which states that a Penalty Notice will be issued for unauthorised absences of 5 days or more.

Appendix B : SIMS / Lesson Monitor Registration Procedures

In this document, “Registration” refers to the act of recording a student’s presence or absence in lessons/sessions, and providing codes for absence from classes or engagement in different approved activities.

In statistics generated by the college, “registration” refers to the “official” register, which has two sessions, am and pm. The am mark corresponds to the period 1 session, but the pm mark is generated from the period 4 class register. **These registers are a legal requirement.**

Lesson by lesson registers, although not statutory, give the college scope to track attendance throughout the day, highlighting any internal unauthorised absence which should be dealt with by the Heads of House

OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES

ALL STUDENTS MUST BE REGISTERED AT MORNING REGISTRATION (PERIOD 1) AND IN EACH CLASS AS [/] PRESENT OR [N] ABSENT. A student who is not present in morning registration should be marked [N] and **NIR** (not in registration) written in the comments box. A student who is late to morning registration or a lesson should be marked ‘L’ for Late and issued with a pink punctuality slip.

If the register has already been taken, staff should ensure that any student who arrives after 8.45am signs in at Reception and registers will be updated accordingly.

Staff should only register as present those students **WHO ARE ACTUALLY PRESENT IN THE ROOM. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE A STUDENT UNMARKED** - mark either Present [/], Absent [N], or Late [L].

If a student is absent for a reason known in advance, it is likely that the attendance team will have pre-entered a code into the system. Class teachers should **not** change this code unless the student is present (e.g. cancelled appointment, felt well so came back to college etc). Subject teachers should enter a comment in the comments box if this is the case

It is important to remember that the college authorises absences, not the parent. This makes decisions by the college regarding the authorisation of absences crucial. **If you are not satisfied with reasons given for absence, you should not authorise the absence without discussion with the Attendance Support Officer.**

NOTES FOR TEACHERS - DEALING WITH ABSENCES AND LATENESS

It is the college’s responsibility to monitor students’ attendance and to inform the Local Authority of students who do not attend regularly or who are ‘missing from education’ (e.g. moved from the area with no known forwarding address).

ABSENCES

On each day of absence, a text message will be generated by the attendance team. Following a response Lesson Monitor will be re-coded appropriately.

□ Our clear expectation of all students and their parents is that, if a student is absent from college then the absence **MUST** be explained by letter / phone call /email/ text message from a parent/carer.

□ It is not the responsibility of the tutor to spend time chasing up attendance, but tutors should ask students for notes from parents and send the attendance team to re-code Lesson Monitor where appropriate and monitor students' attendance for concerns, informing the Heads of House /Attendance Support Officer, as necessary.

LATENESS

1. Students arriving at college after 8.45am (i.e. having missed registration at the start of Period 1) must report to Reception to sign in, then go to their lesson as soon as possible. The class register must then be updated and sent to the system (student marked "L" for late).

2. Lateness will be monitored through SIMS. Students who are late to college will be dealt with by the Heads of House and placed in break time detentions.

3. Students who arrive late to school through no fault of their own (eg. late bus) should report to Reception prior to arriving in their class. When arriving in class, teachers should mark the student as late. This coding will subsequently be amended by the attendance team, when it has been substantiated that a bus arrived late.

EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES

1. Our clear expectation is that all students should be in their tutor room at 8.45 am for morning registration. Any student arriving in the classroom after 8.45 am is LATE for am registration.

2. All Lateness should initially be recorded using the [L] code. If the lateness is later found to be due to an acceptable reason, (e.g. doctor/dentist appointment,) confirmed by letter from home/phone call, and then the [L] is to be replaced with an appropriate code by the attendance team.

LEAVING COLLEGE AFTER REGISTRATION

Students leaving college during the school day must sign out (unless lunchtime). This is a vital safety procedure.

Years 12 and 13 must sign out in the signing out book for Post 16 AND sign in again if returning.

Years 10 and 11 can only leave the site during lesson time for a pre-arranged appointment if they have written permission from a parent to visit the doctor etc. They must inform the tutor and sign out in person at Reception.

Students who feel ill during the college day should report to class, and request to go to Reception. When they report to Reception, a decision will be made if parents should be called.

Appendix C : THE ATTENDANCE CODES USED AT GROBY COMMINTY COLLEGE BY TEACHING STAFF

Since September 2006 the DFES has standardised the attendance codes that schools can use..

The codes to be used by Class Teachers:

/ Present The student was present in the class/tutor group

N Absent The student was not present in class/tutor group.

L Late Arrived late to lesson, teacher

Codes most likely to be used by staff when Re-Coding and Authorising Absences (retrospectively or in advance)

Code Description Meaning

B Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) Approved Education Activity

C Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) Authorised Absence

D Dual registration (ie pupil attending other establishment) Approved Education Activity

E Excluded (no alternative provision made) Authorised Absence

F Extended family holiday (agreed) Authorised Absence

G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement) Unauthorised Absence

H Family holiday (agreed) Authorised Absence

I Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments) Authorised Absence

J Interview Approved Education Activity

L Late (before registers closed) Present

M Medical/Dental appointments Authorised Absence

N No reason yet provided for absence Unauthorised Absence

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

P Approved sporting activity Approved Education Activity

R Religious observance Authorised Absence

S Study leave (Year 11 only) Authorised Absence

T Traveller absence Authorised Absence

U Late (after registers closed) Unauthorised Absence

V Educational visit or trip Approved Education Activity

W Work experience Approved Education Activity

X Non-compulsory school age absence Not counted in possible attendances

Y Enforced closure Not counted in possible attendances

Z Pupil not yet on roll Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix D: Overview of roles and responsibilities:

Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn up to college on time, every day • Attend all lessons, on time
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure child goes to college every day and is on time. • Make appointments outside college hours, whenever possible • Contact the college to explain any absence and notify, in advance, of planned absences for appointments
College	
<p>Attendance team Debbie Lee (Student Services Manager); Andrea Lovell (Attendance Support Officer) and Louisa Howard (Pastoral Admin Assistant) supported by SLT, Heads of House and Head of Post 16 as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with high schools to identify year 9 students with attendance issues and contact home prior to starting at the college • Promote the importance of good attendance to parents and students through displays and articles in newsletter • Oversee completion of lesson registers and refer students who have truanted to the Heads of House • Monitor attendance of individuals, groups and whole college. Share data with stakeholders regularly. • Inform parents of absence and follow up as appropriate • Work with students and parents to identify reasons for absence from college and/or individual lessons • Provide support, advice and guidance for re-integration into college • Reward students for 100% and improved attendance • Case work students who are Persistently Absent • Prepare cases for referral to the Local Authority legal team • Liaise with student wellbeing team, teaching staff, SLT and Governors in designing and implementing strategies to improve attendance
Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take an accurate register at the start of the day. Students absent for registration should be marked N with NIR (not in registration) • Students late for registration, without a valid reason, should be issued with a pink C1 slip, informing them of a break detention • Monitor attendance and punctuality to registration and alert student wellbeing team of any issues • Support attendance team in their work with students and parents to identify and challenge, if appropriate, reasons for absence • Support students back into college/lessons and help them to catch up with work that is missed • Model good patterns of attendance and punctuality
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take an accurate register within the first 20 minutes of each lesson • Students late for a lesson, without a valid reason, should be issued with a pink C1 slip, informing them of a break detention • Work with students and parents to identify reasons for missing lessons – refer to lesson attendance in full reports, if appropriate • Support students to catch up after a prolonged absence • Model good patterns of attendance and punctuality
Curriculum and subject leaders /Head of post-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor attendance to lessons within subject area(s) • Evaluate the impact of attendance on achievement • Develop and maintain a support programme for students whose attendance is impacting on achievement
SLT & Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for monitoring progress towards targets for improving attendance and reducing the number of PA students • Responsible for monitoring the progress towards narrowing the gap of the attendance of vulnerable groups eg PP, SEND and OfC • Responsible for monitoring frequency and impact of interventions