



## Griffin Primary Attendance Strategy

At Griffin Primary, improving attendance is a key strategic aim. The school's vision is embedded within a strong sense of belonging and the belief that every pupil can achieve their own unique potential. The school believes that in order for young people to develop as kind, healthy people, a positive partnership between our parents/carers and our Griffin staff is vital. We believe that attendance is everyone's responsibility. Barriers are addressed with urgency, empathy and high expectations so that pupils are safe, included and able to achieve well.

We know that being in school every day is fundamental to pupils' learning, wellbeing and life chances. Our approach is rooted in belonging, relationships and early support, alongside clear expectations, robust systems and timely escalation. This strategy is informed by national guidance and reflects our commitment to working in partnership with families, Wandsworth Local Authority and Unlocking Potential to ensure every child can attend and succeed.

### 1. Leadership and Management

The Attendance Champion is Jack Taylor.

Attendance at Griffin is both an educational priority and a safeguarding responsibility. The Senior Leadership Team, with support from TEFAT and our RISE partners, ensure that systems are robust, that vulnerable pupils are prioritised, and that support is deployed quickly when concerns emerge. We are part of the Charles Dickens RISE Attendance Hub and attend termly meetings to review strategy and impact.

We have strengthened our capacity through partnership with Wandsworth Education and Welfare Service. Through the RISE project, we have employed an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and are in the process of increasing provision from 1.5 days to 2 days per week. This enables more responsive intervention, closer monitoring, and timely escalation where necessary.

Alongside this work, attendance meetings are a weekly priority. The SLT meets with the EWO each Monday, review persistent absence and conduct attendance meetings. In addition, the weekly Pupil Welfare Meetings review cases and use safeguarding escalation routes where necessary. This work is supported by an attendance tracker which is updated weekly; the tracker enables the school to closely review the attendance of PA and SA pupils, explore the impact of the interventions put in place to improve attendance.

#### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Weekly attendance meetings with attendance champion, senior leaders and the EWO, with agreed actions and review points. Attendance is collected weekly and analysed in this meeting.
- Initial Attendance Meetings and School Attendance Panels happen on a weekly basis.
- Attendance included as a standing item within safeguarding and welfare meetings

- Clear escalation pathways from early support from Unlocking Potential through to statutory intervention from Wandsworth EWS
- Investment in the school environment to promote pride, belonging and engagement
- TEFAT Operations team oversight through regular monitoring and challenge
- Wandsworth EWS oversight through regular meetings

## **2. Expectations and Communication**

We ensure that expectations around attendance are clear, consistent and understood by all members of the school community. For all new joiners to the school, we share the Griffin Attendance Policy. We communicate with families in a supportive and relational way, focusing on partnership and solutions rather than blame.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Teachers are clear about the times when the attendance register opens and closes (8:45 - 9:30).
- Teachers conduct first-day absence calls using a [structured script](#) focused on identifying barriers and offering support
- School office staff use consistent messaging and communication approaches
- We have reduced the number of authorised absences in line with our Attendance Policy
- Regular reinforcement of expectations through newsletters, meetings, texts and assemblies. Every Friday assembly features an attendance element.
- Light touch ‘nudge’ communications using the school’s MIS system, Arbor, that frame absence around lost learning hours and positive connections before automated letter templates.
- Letters generated through the school’s MIS system, Arbor, for families approaching persistence absence
- Celebration of strong and improving attendance to build motivation and belonging, through assemblies and messages home.
- Shifting incentives from individual 100% attendance awards to collective class milestones, and ‘most improved’ recognition to keep vulnerable cohorts motivated.

## **3. Monitoring and Data**

We take a data-informed approach to attendance. Leaders monitor whole school attendance data daily so that concerns are identified early and acted upon quickly, with particular attention given to vulnerable pupils and those at risk of persistent or severe absence.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Weekly [persistent absence tracking](#) used to prioritise intervention, with daily analysis of attendance codes.

- Pre-emptive tracking and weekly monitoring of the 'at-risk tier' (90-93% attendance, or those who's attendance has dropped) to trigger early pastoral contact before pupils fall into formal persistent absence.
- Specific pattern and punctuality analysis and tracking of day-of-the-week absence trends, alongside L (late before close) and U (later after close) codes to flag emerging EBSNA or routine breakdown early, including 'broken weeks' tracking.
- Identification and monitoring of key groups, including pupils with social care involvement and emerging attendance concerns
- Data used to inform EWO meetings, welfare discussions, and escalation decisions
- Regular reporting to TEFAT Ops team to ensure accountability and oversight

#### 4. Universal Support and Prevention

Our first approach with attendance is always to offer support. This can look like taking steps to remove practical barriers to attendance while also building a strong sense of belonging so that pupils want to attend school. We believe ordinarily available provision plays an important role in preventing absence from developing.

##### *What this looks like in practice*

- [Free breakfast club places](#) for children needing a softer start, or at risk of persistent absence
- Universal free breakfast provision supporting punctuality and readiness for learning through a 'grab and go' approach
- [Walking bus provision](#) prioritising vulnerable pupils and those at risk of persistent absence
- Two free after-school club places for every child to strengthen engagement and connection
- Free residential experiences for all pupils in Years 4, 5, and 6 to promote aspiration and belonging
- Whole-school events (such as International Day, fairs and fundraisers) to build community identity, with parents dropping into class for students at risk of EBSNA
- Ongoing improvements to the school environment to develop pride and ownership

#### 5. Targeted Support

We take early and personalised action where attendance concerns arise. Support is tailored to the individual needs of pupils and families and is coordinated through pastoral and safeguarding systems.

##### *What this looks like in practice:*

- Referrals to Unlocking Potential's Family Support Team, personalised to individual's barriers
- Prioritised breakfast club places for pupils at risk of persistent absence
- Individual attendance plans informed by identified barriers
- Early Help approaches coordinated through welfare meetings
- Walking bus access prioritised for vulnerable pupils

- Targeted monitoring and review for pupils with declining attendance

## **6. Support for Pupils with Emotional Barriers to School Attendance (EBSA/EBSNA)**

We recognise that emotional barriers and other challenges can affect a child's ability to attend school. Our staff respond with understanding, structure, and consistency so pupils feel safe and supported. The ongoing training in Berry Street Educational Model's trauma-informed approach complements the work that the Unlocking Potential team do to support with transitions.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- EBSNA training for DSLs
- EBSNA considered as a standing agenda item within welfare meetings
- Soft starts and transitions planned for those at risk
- Structured soft landing entrances, alternative greeting spaces and morning check-ins by a named trusted adult for pupils returning from extended absences or experiencing emotional barriers
- Individual reintegration and support planning - brief 1:1 check ins from a trusted adult during absences to ensure pupils feel missed rather than anxious about catching up.
- Collaboration with families and external professionals
- Identification of trusted adults for pupils requiring additional emotional support
- Use of Boxall Profile for children identified as at risk of EBSNA

## **7. Working in Partnership with Families**

We know that improving attendance takes a partnership approach with families. We aim to understand barriers, provide support, and work collaboratively to improve attendance while maintaining clear expectations about the importance of regular school attendance.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Relational approach focused on identifying barriers and solutions
- Weekly clinics and Coffee Mornings with the Unlocking Potential's Family Support Team to arrange support with housing, routines and other barriers
- Regular communication through phone calls and face-to-face conversations
- Attendance panels to agree shared expectations and support strategies
- Practical support offered where barriers are identified and referrals as appropriate
- Consistent messaging across all staff
- Termly focus groups run via the PTA to enable parent co-design and to co-create solutions for localised barriers.

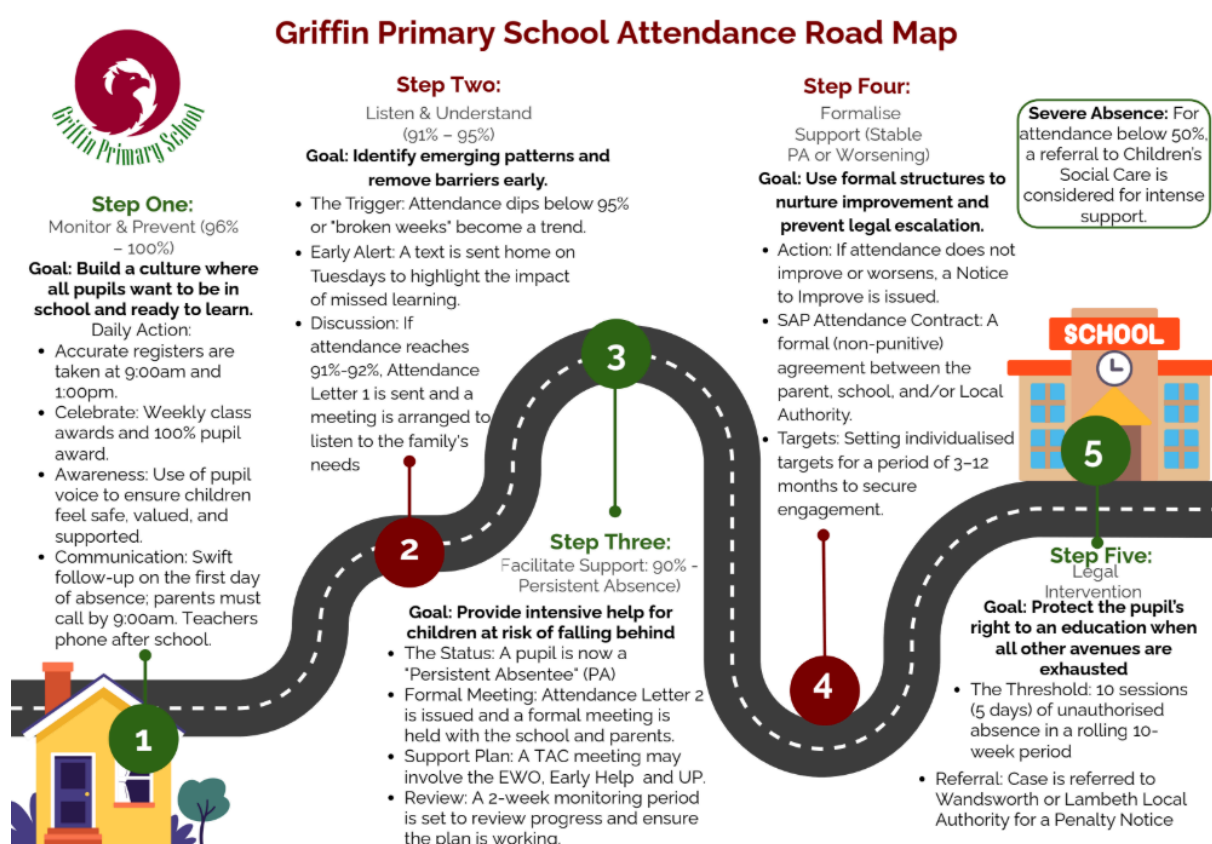
- Establishing a clear, non-punitive Joint Home Visit protocol (SLT & EWO) triggered on day three of unexplained absence.
- Moving to phase 2 of 'Arbor Parent Portal' in which parents can monitor their child's attendance via the portal.

## 8. Formalised Support and Legal Intervention

Alongside this relational approach, we know that relentlessly high expectations of attendance is what will make the difference. Where voluntary support does not lead to improvement, we act promptly to ensure pupils receive their legal entitlement to education. Processes are fair, transparent and aligned with local authority expectations.

### *What this looks like in practice:*

- Timely use of the escalation pathway including School Attendance Panels, Borough Attendance Panels, Notice to Improve and legal processes where necessary
- Alignment with Local Authority staged processes, including [Wandsworth attendance expectations](#)
- Close partnership with the EWO and Local Authority services, with weekly tracking
- Documentation and monitoring at each stage of intervention



## 9. Staff Training and Development

The whole staff at Griffin are key to improving attendance. All adults understand their role in promoting attendance. Training prioritises relational and trauma-informed approaches so pupils experiencing barriers feel safe and understood.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Training on attendance expectations, systems, and procedures
- Teacher training on first-day response conversations with families
- Whole-staff training in the Berry Street Education Model, foregrounding trauma-informed practice, regulation, and empathy
- Staff awareness that pupils at risk of EBSA/EBSNA have access to a trusted adult to support attendance
- Weekly teacher dashboard, including cohort attendance data reviews with class teachers
- Middle leader oversight within appraisal cycles to ensure middle leaders actively manage tier-two attendance alongside SLT
- Ongoing professional development linked to safeguarding and inclusion

## 10. Partnerships

We work collaboratively to improve attendance. Our work with external partners removes barriers, strengthens routines and supports families facing wider challenges, including wellbeing and housing concerns.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Attendance is a priority in our RISE partnership
- We work with schools with excellent attendance in TEFAT to identify new approaches
- We attend Charles Dickens RISE Attendance Hub meetings to review strategy and impact
- Support with EBSNA from Wandsworth Hospital Home Tuition Service
- We have relaunched our PTA to include parents in the conversations about attendance, and provide a range of experiences for children
- We work closely with the Local Authority attendance services through our Education Welfare Officer partnership and the EWS
- Multi-agency collaboration through safeguarding and welfare systems where attendance is a concern
- Targeted mentor provision working with boys at risk of persistent absence to improve engagement and belonging
- Unlocking Potential Family Support Practitioner on-site providing drop-ins and consultations to support:
  - Morning routines and attendance barriers
  - Parenting strategies and wellbeing
  - Housing concerns and wider contextual challenges

## **11. Review and Evaluation**

Improving attendance is an ongoing priority. Leaders regularly review the impact of strategies and adapt provision to ensure continuous improvement, particularly for vulnerable groups.

### ***What this looks like in practice:***

- Weekly attendance reviews with the EWO
- Termly strategic reviews by senior leaders and Regional Director
- Monitoring of persistent and severe absence trends
- Evaluation of intervention impact and refinement of approaches

### **Success measures include**

- Reduction in persistent absence
- Reduction in severe absence
- Improved attendance for vulnerable pupils
- Improved punctuality
- Positive pupil and parent engagement indicators

### **Key Reference Documents**

- [DfE Attendance Toolkit for Schools](#)
- [Griffin Primary Attendance Policy](#)
- [First Day Calling Script](#)
- [Attendance Tracking \(temporary until new form provided\)](#)
- [Griffin Attendance RoadMap](#)
- Appendix A

### **Attendance codes which you may see on your child's record**

L: Pupil arriving after the register has been taken but before the end of the registration period (30 minutes)

V: Pupil attending an educational visit or trip

M: Leave of absence to attend a medical or dental appointment. Please do all that you can to schedule these appointments outside the school day.

C: Leave granted for exceptional circumstances. If you need to take your child out of school you will need to complete the Absence Request form.

R: Religious observance

I: Illness (not medical or dental). Please do check with the NHS guidelines.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

G: Holiday not granted. Please note that we do not authorise holidays in term time.

U: Unauthorised absence