

# Go Fish Education Ltd

## Attendance Policy

### Rationale

At Go Fish Education we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome.

Parents/carers and students play a part in making our provision so successful.

Every student has a right to access the education to which they are entitled.

Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all students.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

### Responsibilities

Kerry Brown will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the Go Fish Education's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied. Kerry Brown will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will work closely with the family and student to ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a student is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parent/carers the need and reasons for the absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with Go Fish Education.

## **Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:**

Ensuring your son/daughter's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers legal responsibility (section of the 1996 and 2002 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/carers will:

- Inform Kerry Brown on the first day of absence by text, email or telephone call
- Discuss with Kerry Brown any planned absences well in advance
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted on subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their son/daughter out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance

## **Recording Attendance**

All attendance will be marked according to the individual's personalised timetable.

The attendance register will mark whether the student is present or absent for their allocated session. If the student is absent, the reason will be recorded.

## **Lateness /Punctuality**

It is important to be on time at the start of the session and to be ready and prepared to learn.

The timings of the session may change in year in the event of an emergency or in response to a national situation e.g. pandemic. Parents/carers would be notified of this in advance where possible.

## **What to do if my child is absent? Procedures for dealing with absence**

### **First Day Absence**

A student not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Reasons for all absences are required from parents/carers. The preferred method is a text/call on the first day of absence at least 30 minutes before the session is due to start.

### **If we have concerns regarding your child's absence, we will:**

- Discuss the situation with you and if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the SEND caseworker and/or social worker

### **Third Day Absence**

Please Note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence we are required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make

all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents/carers and the student including making enquires to known friends, wider family including a home visit.

### **Ten Day's Absence**

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the student is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the student is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the student. Please help us by making sure we always have an up to date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **Continued or Ongoing Absence**

If your child misses a lot of education, without an acceptable reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. It is accepted that some absence will be caused by domestic, social or education based reasons. Where this is the case we will work closely with the home, the student and the Local Authority to help overcome difficulties. Strategies which help to establish the student as a full attendee will be employed and this may involve part time attendance initially.

Students with a record of truancy who return to school will be discretely welcomed back and efforts made to reintegrate them fully into the life of Go Fish Education.

### **Request for Leave of Absence:**

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated from February 2019: (student registration) (England) regulations state that any leave of absence during term time will not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

There is however, no legal entitlement for time off in education time to go on holiday.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to Go Fish Education in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

PLEASE NOTE: If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised.

### **Understanding types of absence:**

Students' are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when Go Fish Education has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when Go Fish Education has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a student's leave of absence from school after a parent's/ carer's request.

### **Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance and other Legal Measures:**

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the setting at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised.

### **Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness**

The Local Authority where the student lives will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance.

If it is necessary to pursue legal measure where there is persistent absenteeism, we will seek advice from the Local Authority, the SEND team and/or the social worker.

### **What can I do to encourage my son/daughter to attend School?**

- Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning
- Ensure that they leave home in the correct clothes and properly equipped
- Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education
- Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch!

### **Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling.**

Parents/carers of a child performer can seek leave of absence from Go Fish Education for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Kerry Brown in writing detailing the nature and frequency of the work, whether their child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a student's participation in a public performance is recorded as C an authorised absence.

### **Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sport.**

Parents/carers of able sports persons can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is however, down to discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of Go Fish Education and are not likely to

be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

### **Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Showman families**

Absence of a student from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed.

That means that we will not remove a Traveller child from our roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away the home we will hold the place open and record the absence as authorised through the T code.

### **Examination Leave**

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No examination leave will be granted during this period; therefore students will be expected to attend school in the usual way.

### **Teenage Pregnancy**

Support will be directed to keeping a student in school and wherever possible her return to full time education as soon as possible after the birth. A student who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

### **Record preservation**

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

### **Appendix 1: Attendance codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
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/ Present (am) \ Present (pm)	Student is present at morning registration	Student is present at afternoon registration
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L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
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B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
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D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
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J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
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P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
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V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
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W Work experience Student is on a work experience placement  
C Authorised leave of absence Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances  
E Excluded Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made  
H Authorised holiday Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances  
I Illness School has been notified that a Student will be absent due to illness  
M Medical/dental appointment Student is at a medical or dental appointment  
R Religious observance Student is taking part in a day of religious observance  
S Study leave Year 11 Student is on study leave during their public examinations  
T Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school  
G Unauthorised holiday Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school  
N Reason not provided Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)  
O Unauthorised absence School is not satisfied with reason for Student's absence  
U Arrival after registration Student arrived at school after the register closed  
X Not required to be in school Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend  
Y Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or Student is in custody  
Z Student not on admission register Register set up but Student has not yet joined the school  
# Planned school closure Whole or partial school closure due to half- term/bank holiday/ INSET day

Date of policy: March 2023

Next review: August 2023