

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



RHODES AVENUE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Approved by: FGB - Curriculum

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Next review due by: Autumn 2023

Attendance and Punctuality Policy Summer 2023

**School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2023 will be released and come into force on 1st September 2023*

Context

Good attendance is pivotal to children's learning, only by being in school can pupils reach their full potential through full access to the curriculum. Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to secure education for their children by sending them to school on time every day.

Rhodes Avenue Primary School (hereafter referred to as the school) recognises the link between attendance and achievement and will make this connection explicit to parents, carers and pupils through positive reinforcement and clear procedure.

Good communication with parents and carers promotes good attendance and punctuality alongside high quality teacher and pupil relationships. Parents and carers will receive regular attendance and punctuality data for their child and also the school's overall attendance data. The school is keen to support children and parents/carers with attendance related issues or problems which may lead to non-attendance.

Aims

At Rhodes Avenue we aim to:

- Encourage and maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality (above the national average);
- monitor and respond quickly to any variance in expected attendance as and when appropriate;
- ensure timely, efficient and effective communication between the school, home and the Local Authority (LA);
- create a positive attitude towards school, so that students feel supported and
- cared for and understand that their attendance is valued;
- celebrate good attendance and punctuality.

Legal Guidance

This policy follows the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance outlined in:

- *The Education Act 1996*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016*
- *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2023*

Legal Expectations and Sanctions

Section 7 of the *Education Act* (1996) states that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full time education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude, and to any special full time education needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

Section 444 of the *Education Act* (1996) states that:

(1) "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence.";

(2) (1A) "If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him to do so, they are guilty of an offence."

Admission/Attendance Registers

The law requires the school to have an electronic *Admissions Register* and an electronic *Attendance Register* and all pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both.

The school's admission register will contain:

- the personal details of every pupil in school, including not only a pupil's full name but also the name they use at school;
- the date of admission or re-admission to the school;
- information regarding parents and carers;
- details of the last school attended.

The school will enter pupils on *The Admission Register* and *Attendance Register* from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. Generally, for most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year and but there always exceptions such as a new school admission after the start of the academic year and the Foundation Stage transition procedures.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Every amendment to the *Admissions* and *Attendance Registers* must include the:

- original entry;
- amended entry;
- reason for the amendment;
- date on which the amendment was made;
- name and position of person who made the amendment.

Entries in the *Admission* and *Attendance Registers* will be preserved for a period of six years after the date on which the entry was made.

Removal from the Admission Register

A pupil can and must be deleted from the *Admission Register* on the grounds prescribed in regulation 9 of the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2023*.

The school will inform the LA of any pupil who is about to be deleted from the *Admission Register*.

Procedures for recording attendance

School commences at 8:55 am and staff members complete an electronic class register at the start of each morning and afternoon session. Morning registers are forwarded electronically to the school admin office by 9.00 am for monitoring.

At every registration staff record whether the pupils is:

- *Present;*
- *Attending an approved educational activity;*
- *Absent;*
- *Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.*

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not;
- Identify the correct code to use
- Ensure that all proper safeguarding actions are taken/in place.

The school uses the national codes to record and monitor attendance and absence which complies with government regulations and which also facilitates the collection of statistics through the School Census System.

Initially an absence (either session) will be recorded as a 'N' denoting that it is unauthorised, this can become an authorised absence once an explanation has been provided. The decision whether or not to authorize an absence is at the discretion of the headteacher.

Procedures for recording absence

Parents and carers must inform the school office if their child is absent, they can telephone the school office (0208 888 2859) or calling the school's attendance line directly (0208 826 1896) and leave a message or speak to a member of the office team.

Parents and carers can alternatively email the office (attendance@rhodesavenue.org.uk) and report an absence. If the school does not receive notification of an absence by 9:30am administration staff will contact the parent/carers of the absent child before the end of the school day to ascertain the reason for the absence.

All written correspondence concerning absence and/or punctuality should be handed into the office.

If the absent child has had a medical appointment the school will request that you show the school appointment letter or card to a member of the office team. After confirmation of the appointment the child will be marked as an '*authorised absence*'.

Procedures for recording lateness

Morning registration begins at 8:55 am, pupils arriving after the close of registration (9:00 am) will be marked present but late. A child arriving after 9:30 am without notification from a parent/carers will be recorded as '*unauthorised late*'. Afternoon registers are closed at 13:20 pm and if a child arrives after 13:50 pm without

notification/explanation, the pupil be recorded as '*unauthorised late*' and be recorded as an absence in the register.

Children arriving at 9:00 am and 13:20 pm must register their lateness at the office using the *Inventry* registration program before going to their classrooms.

If parents/carers know that their child is going to be late it is helpful if they inform the office in advance.

Punctuality is monitored on a monthly basis by the school. If a pupil arrives late on three occasions during a half term the school will alert parents and carers through:

- a letter/email asking the parent/carer to provide an explanation for their child's lateness.

If there is no measurable improvement in punctuality, details will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service (EWS) and/or Social Services where persistent lateness occurs without an acceptable reason.

Punctuality also applies to parents/carers collecting children at the end of the school day. School finishes at 15:30 pm and if a child is not picked up by 15:40pm parents/carers are telephoned and if this lateness persists a log of late arrival will begin to be compiled.

Communication

The school believes that effective communication between parents, carers and the school is important for maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality, therefore:

- parents/carers are informed of the school's attendance and punctuality expectations during Parent Class Meetings and also at Nursery and Reception induction evenings;
- attendance data is celebrated/communicated to parents/carers in
- School Newsletters and on the school website;
- class attendance data is displayed on class notice boards;
- attendance/punctuality figures are reported to Governors in the
- Headteacher's report;
- Individual attendance and punctuality data for the year is reported to parents/carers within a child's individual end of year report.

Positive Reinforcement

All members of the school community have a duty to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the school believes that 100% attendance should be celebrated and rewarded, therefore:

- weekly attendance and punctuality data is shared at the Headteacher's Award

- Assemblies;
- termly 100% attendance certificates are awarded;
- weekly 'Best Attendance' class certificates (Reception to Year 6) are awarded;
- improved attendance certificates from the previous academic year are awarded.

Leave of Absence

If parents/carers are planning to take their children out of school in term time they are required to complete the school's *Absence Request Form* and submit it to the Headteacher for consideration.

The Headteacher will only authorise a *leave of absence* in exceptional circumstances. If the Headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for the Headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday as a norm. Consideration will be given to cultural needs and family circumstances but in all cases, parents/carers will be required to justify why the absence needs to be taken in term time. However, if a child's attendance is below 96% and/or a child's academic performance is below national expectations leave will not be granted.

Current legislation (Section 7) *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*) enables the Headteacher to grant a *leave of absence* for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance within the meaning of Section 37 of *The Children and Young Persons Act (1963)*. Legislation sets out that a local authority license must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Where the license specifies the dates that a child is to be away from school to perform, then the Headteacher will consider the pupil's attendance record and their attainment and progress data before considering whether to authorise a *leave of absence*. Furthermore, where the terms of license do not specify dates it will be again be the headteacher's decision whether to authorize a *leave of absence*. Leave will only be granted up to ten days in a six-month period.

Monitoring Attendance

The school's expectation for attendance is 100%. Attendance is monitored on a monthly basis by the school. If attendance falls below 96% the school will apply the following procedures:

- parents/carers will be informed that their child's attendance is below 96% in the form of a first letter;
- if attendance continues to decline and remains below 96% parents/carers will be sent a second letter;
- if attendance continues to decline and remain below 96% parents will be sent a third letter and asked to attend an 'attendance meeting' in school with the Assistant/Deputy Headteacher;
- if after this there is no improvement in attendance a referral to the Education Welfare Service will be considered and this may lead to enforcement action by the LA.

Education Welfare Service Referrals

The school will inform the LA of any pupil whose attendance is a concern and pupils will be referred to the EWS if:

- a child is on the Child Protection Register with an unauthorised absence and/or if the Designated Teacher for Child Protection has concerns over the reasons given by the parent/carer for absence;
- a pupil for whom the school has concerns and/or if the family cannot be located;
- a pupil whose attendance is below 96% and has been recorded with 3 unauthorised absences;
- the school has not been able to contact parents and carers and the pupil has been absent for 10 continuous days;
- after 10 sessions of authorised absences in a 5-week period that is
- not supported by medical evidence;*
- a pupil fails to return after a fixed term exclusion;
- a parent/carer has notified the school in writing that they are educating their child at home;
- the school is notified that a pupil will be unable to return to school for a (long)
- period of time due to medical reasons and where Medical Needs Tuition may be needed.

(* Note that these figures are not fixed or set, they are for guidance and if there are any safeguarding concerns the EWS/Social Services will be contacted immediately regardless of the number of days.)

Children missing from Education (See Safeguarding Policy)

Links with other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019);
- Equalities;
- Exclusion;
- Behaviour for Learning;
- Administration of Medicines;
- SEN/D;
- Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions.

Equalities

Rhodes Avenue will ensure that it complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the abovementioned Act.