Attendance Policy

Reddish Hall School & The Hive at Reddish Hall

Approved by:	Kaiya Garside	Date: 17.07.2024
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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Promoting good attendance

> Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

> Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

> This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

> Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

> Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

> Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

> Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

> Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

> Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school

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> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated Attendance Officer responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

> Leading attendance across the school

> Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

> Monitoring and keeping an oversight of data analysis

> Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

> Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

> Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

> Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

> Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The designated Attendance Officer responsible for attendance is Kaiya Garside and can be contacted via kaiya.garside@reddishhallschool.co.uk 0161 442 1197 (option1)

3.4 Form Tutors

Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office each morning before 09:15am. In the event of tutor absence, this responsibility to record and submit the correct codes will fall to the TA/Cover Supervisor.

3.5 Admin staff

School admin staff will:

> Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and swiftly pass this information to the attendance officer.

> Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

> Make sure their child attends every day, on time.

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- Contact the school (pupilabsence@reddishhallschool.co.uk OR 0161 442 1197 option 1, making sure to leave a voicemail if necessary) to report their child's absence before 08:30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Parents will understand that the attendance officer may ask for confirmation of medical appointments

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09:00am and will be kept open until 09:15am.

4.2 Unplanned absence

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The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the attendance officer (0161 442 1197) (see also section 7).

Where unplanned pupil absence occurs, parents/carers are required to notify the school via email or telephone on pupilabsence@reddishhallschool.co.uk OR 0161 442 1197

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessary.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

For planned absences, please contact the school's attendance officer, Kaiya Garside – kaiya.garside@reddishhallschool.co.uk.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate L code

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate U code

Where ongoing punctuality issues/persistent lateness occurs, parent/carers will be contacted by the attendance officer for a discussion as to the barriers to punctuality.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> Call and/or text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. Where the school does not receive a response, the emergency contact will be contacted. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may:

  ○ Carry out an unannounced home visit.

  ○ Make external enquiries/referrals where necessary.

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.

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> Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance, attendance reports will be included in the child's report and/or EHCP review.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off family events (weddings/funerals/graduations etc), unavoidable medical appointments, social care meetings etc.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and must be submitted in writing via an email to kaiya.garside@reddishhallschool.co.uk. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

> Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

> Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

> Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

> The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

> One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

> Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

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If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer will regularly monitor students' attendance by utilising a weekly tracking system. Attendance will be categorized into a weekly percentage, a half termly percentage, a termly percentage and a year-to-date percentage. These percentages will be colour coded to easily identify students whose attendance score is declining. Parents/carers may request to see a copy of their child's attendance tracker, along with their attendance report.

6.1 Monitoring attendance

Reddish Hall School will:

> Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.

> Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

6.2 Analysing attendance

Reddish Hall School will:

> Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

> Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

Reddish Hall School will:

> Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

> Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

> Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

> Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

> Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

> Make regular contact with parents/carers by way of letter(s), text messages, phone calls, emails and home visits, offering support where appropriate and necessary. Support packages will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure their effectiveness.

7. Monitoring arrangements

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This policy will be reviewed regularly, as a minimum 12 months by Kaiya Garside, Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by a governor OR Regional Director OR Executive Headteacher

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

> Child protection and safeguarding policy
> Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Code Name	Description of Code
/	Present	AM session – present at school when attendance register is taken
\	Present	PM session – present at school when attendance register is taken
B	Educated off site	Offsite supervised activity approved by the school (not at home). (Nature of the educational activity must be recorded in the Nature of Absence area)
C	Absent with permission – other	Authorised by the school – other circumstances
C1	Absent with permission – performance	Leave of absence for regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Absent with permission – part time timetable	Leave of absence for period of temporary part time education
D	Dual registered	Scheduled to attend another school at which they are they are registered
E	Suspension/Exclusion	Suspension or exclusion (but no alternative provision made)
G	Unauthorised holiday	Holiday not authorised by school
I	Illness	Illness – not medical or dental
J1	Interview	Interview for employment or other educational institution

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K	Other education provision	Attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by the LA. (Nature of the educational activity must be recorded in the Nature of Absence area)
L	Late (before register closes)	Late arrival before the register closes
M	Medical or Dental	Attending a medical or dental appointment (should not be used for periods of illness)
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Temporary code to be used when not aware of the reason for absence. Code should be amended once the reason has been established
O	Unauthorised absence	Absent from school without authorisation
P	Supervised sporting activity	Supervised and approved activity by the school
Q	No access arrangements	Local authority not provided access arrangements
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence for religious reasons
S	Study leave	Study leave to be granted to Year 11 pupils for public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those students who wish to attend school to revise
T	Traveller absence	To be used when traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the schools, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
U	Late (after register closes)	Arrived after registration has closed. Schools should be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek and explanation
V	Education visit	Attendance at an organised trip or visit (including residential trips organised by the school or supervised trip of an educational nature by an organisation approved by the school)
W	Work experience	Work experience for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Failure to attend work experience placement must be recorded using the appropriate code.
X	Not required to be in school	Non-compulsory age children not expected to attend school
Y1	Transport not available	Transport normally provided not available and not within walking distance to school

Y2	Widespread travel disruption	Widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Partial school premise closure	Part of school premises is unavoidably out of use
Y4	Whole school unexpected closure	School is unexpectedly closed (for example – adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil in criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Attendance at school would be contrary/ prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Other unavoidable cause (not covered by any other Y code above). (Nature of the educational activity must be record in the Natre of Absence area)
Z	Pupil not on admission register	For enablement of registers in advance of pupils joining the school. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that it has been agreed that the pupils will attend.
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure (school holiday, bank holiday, INSET)