

POLICY FOR PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

This policy is compliant with SCC policy This policy is based on the DfE's 'Working together to improve attendance' guidance (May 2022) & Ofsted's report (February 2022) 'Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence.'

Introduction

At Redhill Primary School, we are committed to working together to ensure all children receive the best education possible and to enable them to make progress and do as well as they can & prepare them for a successful future. For this to happen, children need to:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school prepared for the day

We will work in partnership with our families to identify the reasons for poor attendance supporting them in addressing any barriers to attendance for their child.

Our approach to securing good attendance, in line with Ofsted's research, can be summarised as ***'Listen, understand, empathise and support - but do not tolerate.'***

Responsibilities

The Headteacher, Mrs L Banks, has overall responsibility for attendance at the school. Mrs Windsor, Mrs Cocker and Miss Stamford work alongside. We are legally required to complete attendance registers accurately and on time, and class teachers ensure this is the case.

Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. The school will promote the importance of positive behaviour and good attendance through the curriculum and school values (ANTLERS). Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. We will ensure that parents are aware of attendance matters as they relate to their child and work with them to ensure good attendance and punctuality.



Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. The attendance policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils.

Our Expectations:

We expect that all pupils will:

- ✓ Attend school regularly and punctually.
- ✓ Arrive at school by 8.55am (gates open at 8.45am) for the daily morning session and 12.45pm - for the daily afternoon session.
- ✓ Attend school appropriately prepared for the day. (eg refreshed, wearing uniform, any necessary kit or equipment needed). - Ready, Respectful & Safe.

We expect that parents/carers will:

*Ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually and ready to learn. **Regular attendance is a legal requirement.*** Parents/ carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- ✓ Maintain effective home routines at home to support good attendance
- ✓ Notify the school of a pupil absence by 8.45am on the first day of absence.
- ✓ Not take their children out of school during term time for the purpose of family holidays.
- ✓ Provide the school with up to date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility.
- ✓ Contact the school promptly whenever any problem/change of circumstance occurs that may keep a child away from school.
- ✓ Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for your child including attending any meetings.

We expect that teachers will:

- ✓ Keep an accurate attendance register.
- ✓ Ensure pupils are able to learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.
- ✓ Praise pupils for punctuality and good attendance.
- ✓ Monitor pupil absence and inform the Headteacher when absence is impacting upon achievement.

We expect that Senior Leaders will:

- ✓ Inform parents/carers of school policy and procedures with regards to attendance.



- ✓ Monitor attendance as a priority and to develop policies and procedures to ensure the expectation of 96% attendance is met.
- ✓ Give regular updates on attendance levels to parents
- ✓ Intervene early when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern.
- ✓ Develop a multi-agency response to attendance.
- ✓ Utilise the support of available specialists in relation to the attendance.
- ✓ Report termly to the Academy Council.

Daily Routines:

Breakfast Club opens at 8am. Places can be booked with Mrs Banks or the school office.

At Redhill our staff meet and greet our pupils at the gate This begins at 8.45am each day. Pupils are then able to go to the school classrooms.

Attendance registers are taken at the start of each morning session of each school day at 8.55am and once during each afternoon session.

Our school day begins at 8.45am The morning register will open and be taken at 8.55am. Any pupil arriving after 8.55am is required to report to the main school office to sign in and provide a reason for lateness

If arrival is before 9.15am then the pupil will be recorded as late (Late **before** the close of register)

The school register will officially close at 9.15am Any pupil arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session (Late **after** the close of register)

Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in further action being taken to support improved attendance

Afternoon Registration is between 12.45 and 12.50pm for Reception, Year 1 & 2 and between 1.00pm and 1.05pm for Year 3, 4, 5 & 6. Afternoon registers close at 1.15pm.

Our normal school day ends at 3.15pm. This will move to 3.25pm from September 2023.

Schools are required by law to take an attendance register twice a day and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.

If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required. 90% attendance might sound impressive, but actually ...



- If a child has 90% attendance over a school year, this means that 4 whole weeks' worth of lessons have been missed
 - If 90% attendance is maintained over 5 years, half a school year will have been missed overall
- 90% attendance is not impressive, we use this Attendance Ladder in school to make sure children realise that in Attendance terms, 90% represents a significant, persistent problem that needs to be avoided.



The DfE identifies 90% as persistent absence, and therefore the school uses this percentage to trigger documentation linked to persistent absence. ***If your child has had 5 days absence for medical/illness reasons then medical evidence will be required to authorise the absence from the 6th day.***

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical appointments or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents keeping children off from school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive to school after the close of the register;
- school refusal;
- holidays taken during term time that have not been authorised by the Head Teacher;



- when your child's attendance is 90% or below or **if your child has had 5 days absence for medical/illness reasons then medical evidence will be required to authorise the absence from the 6th day.**

When completing the register, school follow the DFE school attendance guidance to determine which relevant code to use;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schoolattendance>

Arriving Late:

Each morning, pupil entrances will remain open until 8.55am. Any pupil arriving after the pupil entrance has closed will receive a later mark (L) on the register.

When a pupil arrives after the pupil entrances close they will need to be signed in at the main school office/late gate and a reason for the lateness must be given.

The headteacher / school office is responsible for maintaining the signing in/out system. This contains details of name, class, time admitted/time released and reason for lateness/early departure.

Minutes late per day during a school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost a year in KS1	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year in KS2
5	3.7 days	3.4 days
10	7.4 days	6.9 days
15	11 days	10.3 days
20	14.7 days	13.8 days
30	22 days	20.7 days

Ways to avoid being late at Redhill:

- Breakfast Club opens from 8.00am.
- Pupil jobs and responsibilities in school.
- Study Club / Tutoring.

Any child who goes home during the lunch hour must be collected from the school office at the end of the morning session. They must return to school by 12.40 pm (Reception, Year 1 & 2) and 12.55 pm (Year 3, 4, 5 & 6) in order to be in their classroom in time for the afternoon registration period. Any children arriving after the afternoon registration period will be marked as late (L).

Persistent Lateness:

If lateness is a cause for concern, the following procedures will be applied:

1. Parents will receive a letter informing of the concern
2. Parents will be invited to a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The discussion held will be documented and an action plan to improve punctuality will be devised with Parents and the pupil during the meeting and a review date set if needed

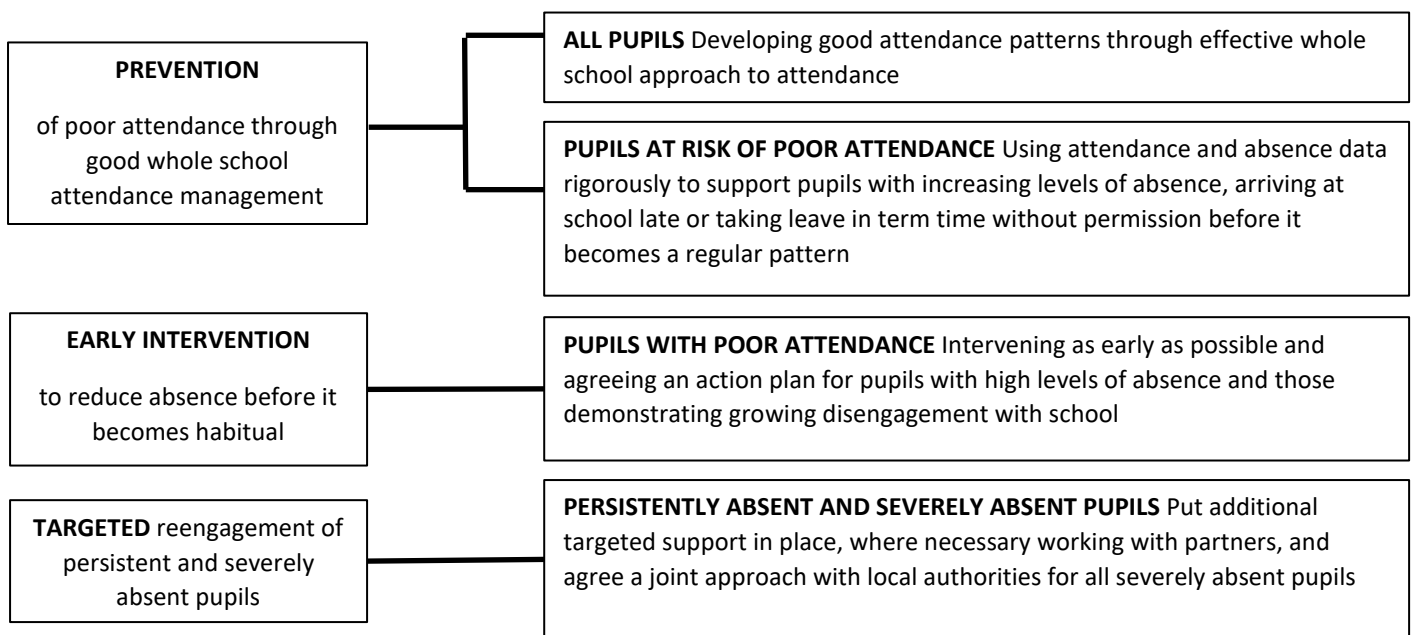
3. If no improvement is evidenced, the school will follow Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for persistent lateness. More information can be found at:



Absence Prevention:

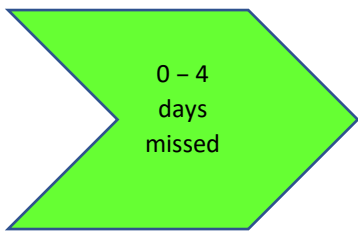
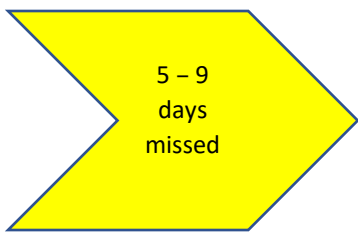
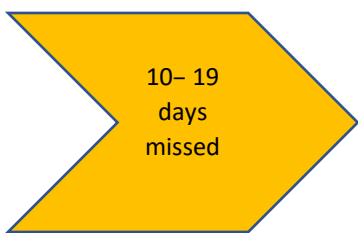

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

Our approach to attendance management is based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support. We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance, have poor attendance or are identified as being either persistently absent or severely absent.



Our strategy for using data to target our work on attendance, including reducing persistent absence (pupils who are absent for 10% or more sessions) and severe absence (pupils who are absent for 50% or more sessions) is based on the following chart:



	<p>98 – 100% attendance</p>	<p>MAINTAIN</p> <p>Whole school approach/ celebrating good attendance</p>	<p>Positive praise in assemblies & shout outs recognise good attendance as does out punctuality raffle tickets.</p>
	<p>95– 97.9% attendance</p>	<p>PREVENTION</p> <p>Pupils at risk of poor attendance</p>	<p>Check ins with children upon their return to school & also confirm absence reason with parents.</p> <p>Consider voluntary support if needed.</p>
	<p>90.1 –94.9% attendance</p>	<p>EARLY INTERVENTION</p> <p>Pupils with poor attendance</p>	<p>School formal monitoring will start below 95%. School will consider target setting & support meetings.</p> <p><i>Medical evidence will be required from the 6th day of absence – these do not need to be consecutive days.</i></p>
	<p>90% or below attendance</p>	<p>PERSISTENTLY ABSENT</p> <p>10% or more absence</p> <p>SEVERELY ABSENT</p> <p>50% or more absence</p>	<p>Statutory Social Care Involvement &/or Attendance Prosecution:</p> <p>Persistently Absent children will be supported by the Home School Support Worker, support plan in place but at 85% the school will consider a Penalty Notice</p> <p>Severely absent children will be co-managed between the school & local authority</p>

Penalty Notices:

A Penalty Notice is a fine to a parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents/carers must pay up to £60 if they pay within 21 days; or up to £120 if they pay within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

The school will follow Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for persistent lateness. More information can be found at:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Code-of-Conduct-From-1.1.2018.pdf>



Children Missing in Education

Schools have a duty by law to refer any absence of 20 days or more to Staffordshire County Council's Children Missing in Education department where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence. In line with our safeguarding policy, which is based on the Staffordshire Safeguarding policy, we will do this following a continuous absence of 10 days or more.

In order to avoid any referrals, parents are requested to inform the school if they are moving house/area or country and to provide a forwarding address, contact number and the name of the new school if known.

Elective Home Education

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this - particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record. Prior to making a decision to Elective Home Educate, Parents are requested to contact Staffordshire

Staffordshire County Council's Elective Home Education department;

[Elective home education - Home - Staffordshire County Council](#)

Medical Absence

In the case of specific illnesses that require pupils to be kept off school, parents should follow public health advice to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community. These illnesses are Chickenpox, Diarrhoea and Vomiting, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Scabies, Scarlet Fever and Whooping Cough - see ['How long should you keep your child off school - checklist poster'](#)

If a child is ill the parent/carer's first action is to call the school on **01543 227140**, where possible, before 8.45am and notify the school office of the absence and the reason for the absence. An answerphone service is available or email office@redhill.set.org

This needs to be done every day of absence (unless the child is admitted to hospital, or has a long-term illness-related absence for a period of time - in this instance parents/carers do not need to ring every day).

If a child is not in school and we have not had a phone call by 9am one of our pastoral team will call parents/carers to find out why a child is not in school. If no contact is made a text message will be sent and a home visit may be carried out.

Safe and well checks will be conducted by the pastoral team if a child has not been seen in school for a minimum of three days.



Medical and Dental Appointments

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays whenever possible. If this is not possible then confirmation of the appointment will be required prior to authorising the absence. Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents expected to return their children to the school following the appointment whenever possible.

Long-term medical absence

The school follows the procedures set out by Staffordshire County Council "Children who are missing Education due to Health/Medical Needs" More information can be found at:

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/advice.page?id=cwhbuUNF4cc#:~:text=Protocol%20for%20Children%20who%20are%20missing%20Education%20due,health%20needs%20who%20are%20of%20compulsory%20school%20age.>

Request for a Leave of Absence

The headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

Holidays are not generally considered as 'exceptional circumstances'. It is expected that families will take holiday in the school holiday periods.

Any request for leave of absence must be made in writing to the headteacher on the 'Request for Leave' proforma available from the school office (**Appendix 1**). This must be received at least fourteen days in advance for it to be considered by the headteacher. Where a child does not reside with both parents, it is the responsibility of the parent making the request to inform the other parent. The school will send a reply to both parents.

The headteacher is the only person able to authorise leave of absence.

The headteacher may grant compassionate leave as authorised absence.

From 1st January 2018 any period of unauthorised leave (a period could be as little as one day) may result in parents/carers receiving a penalty notice fine. The headteacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will only apply in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by the headteacher to the local authority.

Any request made because of exceptional circumstances can only be judged on a case-by-case basis, taking into account individual circumstances. Requests should be made in writing at least fourteen days before the period of requested absence, otherwise they will be automatically unauthorised. Only the Principal can overrule this, in discussion with the Academy Council, and **only in exceptional circumstances**, eg overseas funerals.

Even with the "exceptional circumstances" we will still consider the following on a case-by-case basis before permission can be granted:



- Current level of school attendance including punctuality. Where attendance is below 96%, the absence may not be authorised, even in the case of exceptional circumstances;
- The current progress being made towards individual pupils' academic targets;
- The time and length of the requested exceptional absence;
- The amount of exceptional absence that has been authorised previously.

If an unauthorised leave of absence is taken, the school follow Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for unauthorised leave of absence. More information can be found at;

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Code-of-Conduct-From-1.1.2018.pdf>

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time, properly dressed, with the correct equipment and ready to learn.

Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act, Section 444. It aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children. If a child is in the care of foster carers or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance to school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, education welfare services and social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the Principal or in excess of the period authorised by the Principal e.g. family holiday)
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

A session is equivalent to half a day in school.



Other conditions:

- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence / lateness will be restricted to one notice/ warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.

As part of this process the parent(s) could first be issued with a 20 day notice period, clearly advising that if unauthorised absence / lateness occurs in this 20 day period, a Penalty Notice may be issued. This is to allow the parents a further period to address their child's irregular attendance by working with the school or other agencies. It is part of a scaled approach and affords the parents an opportunity to avoid receiving a penalty notice. This is seen as good practice and integral to a proportionate response.

Therefore, the process is as follows:

- School completes and signs a penalty notice request form.
- School provides the pupil's attendance registration certificate signed by the Head teacher / Principal - or their nominated deputy - confirming that non-attendance / lateness during the period was unauthorised.
- School provides an assessment and plan which demonstrates that the use of a Penalty Notice is now the appropriate action to improve the child's school attendance / punctuality.
- The local authority issues a 20 day Warning Notice to the parent (s) advising them of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and that the child must have no unauthorised absence / lateness during the set period.
- If there are unauthorised absences / lateness in the period and after due consideration of the facts of the case with the school, issue a Penalty Notice through the post.

Please note:

Where the Penalty Notice is requested from a school in response to a leave of absence (holiday) related unauthorised absence or is in relation to an offence under section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the formal warning letter and 20 day improvement period will not apply.

All Penalty Notices are entered onto a database maintained by Families First to ensure that no duplicate Penalty Notices are issued.

Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence / lateness will be restricted to one notice/ warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.



Summary

It is vital to a child's progress that they attend school as often as possible and that they are on time. There are strong and proven links between pupil attendance and educational achievement. Attendance of less than 95% (equivalent to 9.5 days or more absence in a school year) has been shown to compromise pupil attainment. An attendance of 90% is equivalent to missing 19 days or nearly 4 weeks from school in a year. Whilst we are a primary school, statistics show that only 10% of pupils who are persistently absent from school achieve 5 A*-C grades at GCSE/the equivalent on the 1-9 scale grades.

Procedure Originator: L Banks

Approved by: Academy Council

Date Approved: April 2023

Review Interval: Annually

Last review date: April 2023

Next review date: September 2023



Redhill Primary School - Term Time Leave Request Form Appendix 1

Dear Headteacher,

I request consideration for a grant of leave from school during term time for:

My child's full name: Date of Birth:.....

Address:

For the period from (date) :.....to (date).....

Total Number of days: Location (if travelling):.....

Name/s of parent / carer who will be with the child(ren) when the leave is taken:

Name:..... Name:.....

The **exceptional circumstances** and reason for the request are –

(please detail below the reason for your request of absence in term time and where relevant, include any supporting information)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Are there any siblings of compulsory school age? **Yes / No** (if so, please complete full names below.)

Child/ren's full name/s:..... School/s attended:

.....
.....
.....

Declaration:

I have read the guidance notes for parents overleaf and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my / our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. **Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day, this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.**

Signature of 1st parent / carer Print full name:

Signature of 2nd parent / carer Print full name:



Please return completed form to school office.

The school will write to you to inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

Redhill Primary School - Term Time Leave Request Form- Appendix 2

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

My child's full name:

Request for leave for the period from (date) :..... to (date).....

Current attendance%

Last Year's attendance%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time (this academic year)

Leave Request: **Agreed / Not Agreed**

Request for leave is agreed / not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed: (Headteacher)

Date:

Notification of decision – date letter sent to parent / carer

