



Willow Tree Academy Roughwood Primary School



Attendance Policy

Ratified: January 2019

To be reviewed: January 2020



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE and LA Guidance

Reference to Parent/Carer throughout this document also includes any person who has parental responsibility or who cares for children.

Reference to school throughout this document is Roughwood Primary School

Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- ❖ The school is committed to maximising the achievement and attainment of all pupils.
- ❖ There is a clear link between good attendance, educational achievement and social inclusion.
- ❖ Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the school.
- ❖ Parents/carers have a responsibility to work together with school to encourage pupils excellent and consistent attendance.
- ❖ A broad and balanced education is dependant on regular attendance at school.
- ❖ School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- ❖ All pupils are expected to reach attendance of 96% in any academic year.

Statement of Expectations

What the school expects of the pupils:

- ❖ To attend regularly.
- ❖ To arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day.
- ❖ Children should be in the playground ready for the whistle which is blown at 8.50a.m.
- ❖ If a pupil arrives late they must enter school via the children's entrances if it is before 9.10a.m and through reception if it is later.

What the school expects of the parents/carers:

- ❖ To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time every day.
- ❖ To inform the school of any reason that may prevent their children from attending. All information can be shared in confidence.
- ❖ To ensure that they contact the school before 9.10a.m on the first day their child is unable to attend, giving a valid reason for absence
- ❖ Children should return to school after illness as soon as they are able.
- ❖ To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day. This includes being in correct uniform.
- ❖ To provide school with evidence of any forthcoming appointments and, wherever possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.

If a pupil leaves the school premises for any reason during the school day, staff will ensure that this is recorded to comply with Health & Safety Regulations. Children will only be allowed out of school in exceptional circumstances. If they have an appointment we will need to see an appointment card or letter.

Holiday Requests (Leave of Absence requests):

Section 7 of the Education Act states that:

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential in order for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Rotherham Education Welfare Service will continue to investigate cases of regular absence from school and, following appropriate casework intervention, will instigate legal action if applicable.

In line with amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 with effect from 1st September 2013

To ensure the continuity of all children's education, family holidays should be taken during school holiday periods.

All requests for family holidays in term time will be refused. Should parents choose to take their child out of school they are required to complete a "Notice of Unauthorised Absence" form. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days. After that time it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

The Local Authority will consider requests to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised holidays in term time at the Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice Panel.

The Fixed Penalty Notice Panel will require supporting documentation and relevant information including all correspondence with the parent as consideration needs to be given to whether there are any mitigating circumstances.

The supportive documents required are:-

- An attendance certificate showing the unauthorised holiday code (G)
- An attendance certificate showing the percentage attendance for the previous academic year or 3 terms
- Any application made by the parent(s) requesting leave of absence in term time
- The school's response to the application for leave of absence detailing the reason(s) for refusal and all associated correspondence
- The school's letter to the parent(s) to say they are referring the matter to the Local Authority with the intention of requesting the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice

➤ Provided the referral has met all criteria the Local Authority will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice by post

No parent can demand a leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday by right.

What Parents and pupils/students can expect of the school:

- ❖ A broad and balanced education that is dependant on regular attendance at school.
- ❖ The encouragement and promotion of excellent attendance.
- ❖ Efficient and accurate recordings of attendance and punctuality.
- ❖ First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school. This is generally via telephone but a text may be sent if contact cannot be made by phone, however, responsibility lies with parents to inform school of any absence.
- ❖ If parents have not contacted school and school have made a call with no response then staff may visit the home for a welfare check.
- ❖ Any barriers to attendance will be dealt with in a supportive manner.
- ❖ Close liaison with the Early Help attendance team to assist and support families where needed.
- ❖ Parents will be notified at an early stage of any concerns around attendance using the Sol Tracker system. This system allows regular updates to be shared. This can be by phone, text or letter.
- ❖ Where attendance is a concern, parents may be invited to attend an Attendance Panel within school where they will meet with the attendance Team, a School Governor and a member of the Early Help Team. The purpose of this meeting is to find a way forward and support families to ensure improved attendance.

- ❖ Attendance of below 90% is classed as persistent absence. The Early Help Team may become involved and this may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act.

Understanding Different Types of Absence

Only school can decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always requested to ensure that attendance is correctly categorised.

If your child has a sniffle or slight cough please ask yourself “ Do they really need to be at home?” If they are unwell during the day we will call you.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an acceptable reason, for example: illness and/or medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in the school day.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider to be reasonable. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- ❖ Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily in the view of the school.
- ❖ Absence that has not been properly explained.
- ❖ Pupils/students who arrive in school too late to receive their mark
- ❖ Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- ❖ Day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst most pupils will be away from school because of illness, some individuals can be reluctant to attend. Any such problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school and the family. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we encourage the family to work with all involved to understand the root of the problem. When necessary we will engage the support of other agencies such as the School Nurse and Early Help Team.

Each day counts for two (am/pm) marks of attendance or absence. If your child is absent for 16 sessions(8 days) in an academic year they will not reach their target of 96%.

Attendance of less than 90% is called persistent absence and this has to be reported to the Local Authority throughout the year. Attendance at this level can lead to legal proceedings

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Registration Procedure

- ❖ The school day begins at 8.50a.m on the playground. The whistle is blown by a member of staff and the pupils walk into school in a sensible manner.
- ❖ Registers are taken electronically in class by the teacher or teaching assistant before 9a.m and again at 1.00p.m. and 1:15pm. (These times vary for Early Years and Foundation)
- ❖ A mark is added for every pupil who is present. Children who are not yet in the classroom should be recorded with N. The attendance team will compile a report detailing all children marked with an N before 9.15a.m and will then proceed to investigate their absence.

- ❖ If a pupil arrives after the children have entered school but before 9.10a.m, they should proceed to the class and get their mark and give their meal choice.
- ❖ If a pupil arrives after 9.10a.m they should enter school through reception. The receptionist will record their arrival and meal choice.
- ❖ Pupils/students arriving between 9.10a.m. and 10:00a.m will receive a late mark. This may also incur a red dojo.
- ❖ The morning register closes at 10 am after which time a late arrival is recorded as an unauthorised absence. If a medical appointment has been attended, a medical absence will be recorded providing an appointment card or letter detailing the appointment is seen.

Responding to Lateness

- ❖ Children who are late are asked to apologise to their Teacher when they enter the classroom. A child entering the classroom late not only misses their own learning but disturbs the learning of others.
- ❖ If a child is recorded as late a text message will be sent to parent/carer.
- ❖ In the case of persistent lateness, parents will be asked to attend a meeting in school to plan how we can work together to ensure good punctuality. Punctuality is a life skill. Please work with us to help your child get the best possible start.

Response to Attendance Issues

- ❖ The school will identify and monitor pupils/students whose attendance gives cause for concern: 96% or less.
- ❖ Parents will be informed at an early stage if their child's % attendance is falling and support will be offered.
- ❖ A report is made to the Local Authority each half term detailing those children with attendance below 90%
- ❖ Sol Tracker strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual pupils.
- ❖ After long periods of absence it may be decided, in consultation with parents and/or agencies, that a gradual reintegration process should be followed.

Date: January 2019

Review Date: January 2020