



Attendance policy

Redhill School

Approved by: J Clayton

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Redhill School strives to create an environment in which all pupils may achieve their full potential and feel happy and secure. Outstanding attendance and punctuality are vital factors in all pupils being successful at school: these increase the chances of a successful future and adult life. We set a target of 96% attendance for all pupils at Redhill so that they can make the most of the incredible learning opportunities on offer.

Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and may lead to pupils being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Punctuality is also vital. Arriving late at school is very disruptive for the pupil, the teacher and other students. Attendance and punctuality are a shared responsibility and partnership between home, school, and the Educational Support Service (ESS). An effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents, staff and appropriate agencies is therefore essential.

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](#)
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- › [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
- › 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 senior leader 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
- › Having 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Bacciochi and can be contacted via jbacciochi@redhill.dudley.sch.uk or by calling 01384 816351

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Mr Bacciochi) and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher / AHT attendance (Mr Bacciochi) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss Reynolds and can be contacted via areynolds@redhill.dudley.sch.uk or by calling 01384816631.

3.5 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Registers are taken within the first 10 minutes of period 1, period 2, period 3, period 4, Tutor Time and period 5.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls, absence line messages, Edu Link messages and e-mails from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the relevant member of the Pastoral Team in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Provide any pupils who sign in late with a purple late slip
- Ensure that any pupil who is signing out has the appropriate authorization (note, etc.) and contact parents / carer prior to the pupil leaving where this is not in place

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:10am 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time – all pupils must be in classrooms ready to start period 1 by 8:40am
- Attend every timetabled session on time – pupils arriving to a lesson outside of the agreed movement time will receive an 'L' mark for that period
- Sign in at main school reception when arriving after 09:10am
- Sign out at main school reception if they are leaving site for an appointment (ensuring that they have a signed and dated note from their parent / carer or that a message has been added to EduLink)

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 08:40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:40am and will be kept open until 09:10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:40pm and will be kept open until 12:40pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7).

To report an absence, a parent / carer can:

- Call the absence line on 01384 816350 and leave a message (giving their child's full name, form group, and reason for absence)
- Use the absence reporting function on the EduLink app

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or where absence levels have reached a key stage in the school attendance systems.

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 unnecessarily.

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.

If a planned absence is unavoidable, a parent/carer is expected to contact the attendance officer (Mrs Dorrell) as soon as possible in advance to discuss the request. A decision will then be made as to whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Punctuality is monitored on a daily basis and any pupil who arrives late twice or more during the school week will be given a detention where they will be expected to catch-up on any lost learning
- Where punctuality issues persist, a meeting between the pupil, parents/ carers and school will be called to address these issues and see whether there is any support which could be offered by the school to help resolve this issue

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:

- Contact the pupil's parent / carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason
- If contact has not been made by the parent / carer and the pupil is absent for a second unexplained day, a home visit will be completed by the attendance officer and member of the Pastoral Support Team
- If the home visit is unsuccessful, all emergency contacts will be called to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil
- If contact has not been made by the parent / carer and the pupil is absent for a third unexplained day, a second home visit will be completed by the attendance officer and member of the Pastoral Support Team. If contact has still not been made at this point, contact with external agencies (such as Children's Services and the Police) will be made
- Once the reason for an unexplained absence has been given, the attendance officer will 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

It is important that all parents / carers understand that they must communicate all absences to school via the systems mentioned in section 4.2 in order to ensure that the school are aware where pupils are and are meeting their statutory safeguarding duty.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents are encouraged to download and access the EduLink app which gives their child's live attendance (including sessions missed and whether these have been authorised or unauthorised). In addition, pupil attendance is included in each progress report which is sent home.

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 events which are unavoidable (for example bereavement, attendance at a funeral or a housing crisis which prevents attendance).

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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via main school reception or by e-mailing info@redhill.dudley.sch.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

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

As a school, Redhill will act on the advice and guidance from the DfE and

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Redhill, we continuously promote the importance of strong attendance and punctuality and link this to the learning and opportunities for all pupils.

In order to promote positive attendance we will:

- Analyse data to celebrate pupils achieving our attendance and punctuality benchmarks
- Analyse data to celebrate pupils who are making efforts to improve their attendance or punctuality
- Recognise pupils who are making consistent efforts in terms of their attendance and punctuality on a monthly, half-termly, termly and annual basis
- Communicate regularly with parents & carers to recognise and celebrate attendance and punctuality successes

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance on a daily basis and work with pupils and parents/carers to ensure that attendance for all pupils is as high as possible
- Analyse absence data bi-monthly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level during attendance meeting where pupil data is explored by the AHT for attendance, Attendance Officer, Heads of Year and Pastoral Support Workers
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Make regular and timely contact with all parents / carers to discuss attendance concerns, offer support and ensure that ongoing concerns are addressed by following the school's escalation process (see Appendix 2)
- Work closely with external agencies (such as the Local Authority and the Education Support Service) to offer support and challenge parents / carers to ensure high levels of attendance for all pupils at Redhill

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The 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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The 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

7.4 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 (including historic data to offer timely support to address emerging issues)
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) 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
- Following our attendance strategy to ensure timely and strategic responses to low or falling attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every academic year by AHT Attendance (Mr Bacciocchi) alongside discussion with stakeholders. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. 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	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
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Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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 pupil's

		absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil 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 pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Redhill Attendance Procedures

