THE ROSEWOOD SCHOOL

Staff Responsible: Mr D Kirk Policy Date – September 2023 Review Date –September 2024 onsible: Mr D Kirk

# motion.jpg

Attendance Policy 2023-2024

**Rosewood School**

As a specialist school we want your child to have the same opportunities, experiences, and aspirations as any other child. To ensure your child gains the greatest benefit from their education it is vital they attend regularly. We value the partnership with parents and the wider community to drive the school forward and support your child throughout their education. You and your child play an important role in making our school successful.

Your child should be at school every day on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is **unavoidable**. “Improving Attendance is everyone’s business” (Working together to improve school attendance DFE 2022). It is important that you make sure that your child attends regularly, and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

**Date of Policy/Review:**

**Policy reviewed by:**

**Approved by Governors:**

**Next review due:**

 **Why is regular attendance important?**

Good attendance is learnt behavior. It is proven that children with the higher attendance achieve highest attainment and have wider life chances. Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

**School strives for every child to have over 96% attendance. This is equivalent of a child having no more than 7 school days absence in the whole academic year.**

90% attendance may sound good however your child would be classified as persistently absent and:

If your child’s attendance is 90% throughout KS3 and KS4 (5 years) it is equivalent to **missing one half of a school year!**

90% attendance may only give your child a **50% chance** **of achieving GCSE grades 9-5**

**Government expectations:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is “everybody’s business” (DFE 2022) - parents, pupils, all members of school staff and the LA. To achieve excellent attendance school will follow the DFE guidance flow chart “working together to improve attendance” (DFE 2022)

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**The Law relating to attendance:**

Ensuring your child’s regular attendance at school is the registered parent/carer**\*** responsibility. If a child fails to attend school regularly the parent/carer can be held accountable and be prosecute as per legislation set out under the Education act 1996. The two offences are:

* Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 - a fine of up to £1,000.
* Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996 - a fine of up to £2500 or imprisonment for up to 3 months

The Local Authority can also issue sanctions for general absence and leave of absence (holiday out of term time) by issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine).

**\*The Education Act 1996 defines a Parent as:**

* All natural Parents, whether they are married or not
* Any person who has Parental Responsibility for a child; and
* Any person who has care of a child, i.e. lives with and looks after a child

**Safeguarding:**

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. We all play a crucial role in protecting children and young people to keep them safe and help them to feel safe.  Ofsted under Section 5, make judgements in relation to the effectiveness of Safeguarding. Rosewood School recognises it has a legal duty under Section 157 and 175 of The Education Act 2002, to work together with other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.  Our school has a clear “Child Protection Policy” which takes into account the “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (July) 2018 document and adhere to “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (Sept 23):

* Protecting children from maltreatment.
* Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
* Taking action to enable all children have the best outcomes.
* Detecting early support through school’s support strategies or an Early Help Assessment.

All safeguarding processes are reviewed annually and ensures all staff including Governors and Volunteers undertake appropriate training with regard to safeguarding.

 **The Law relating to safeguarding:**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

**Failing to attend school on a regular basis and unexplained absence may be considered as a safeguarding matter.**

**Attendance procedures and types of absence:**

Every half-day absence (either morning or afternoon) from school must be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required.

The school may grant an authorised absence for reasons such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

* Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
* Parental illness [alternative arrangements should be made to get children to school –

emergencies excepted]

* Truancy before or during the school day.
* Confusion over school dates.
* Inadequate clothing/uniform.
* Absences which have never been properly explained.
* Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (after class register has closed).
* Shopping, looking after other children, oversleeping, or birthdays.
* Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.
* When attendance is classified as persistently or severely absent and parents have

been requested to supply medical evidence.

* Persistent non-specific illness e.g., poorly/unwell.
* Absence of siblings if one child is ill.
* Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons.

Whilst any child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. If your 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 can often make your child feel more anxious over time and make matters worse. **If there are any problems with regular attendance, please contact the school to discuss these matters as early as possible so we can support you and your child.**

If your child has been identified as having **attendance below 90%,** they may have all further absence **unauthorised** on school’s register. However, should parent/carer provide evidence from a medical practitioner or another professional advising that the period of absence was necessary, the absence for the evidenced period will be authorised.

**The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CODE**  | **DESCRIPTION**  | **MEANING**  |
| **/  \**  | Present in school / = am, \ = pm  | Present   |
| **B**  | Off-site educational activity e.g., taster day at another school  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **C**  | Leave of absence granted school e.g., pupil participating in a performance, part-time timetable  | Authorised absence  |
| **D**  | Dual registered at another school  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **E**  | Excluded but no alternative provision made  | Authorised absence  |
| **F**  | Extended family holiday (agreed)  | Authorised absence  |
| **G**  | Holiday not granted by school or in excess of the period determined by school  | Unauthorised absence  |
| **H**  | leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school  | Authorised absence  |
| **I**  | Illness (NOT medical or dental appointment)   | Authorised absence  |
| **J**  | Interview e.g., with another educational establishment  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **L**  | Late (before registers closed)  | Present  |
| **M**  | Medical or Dental appointment  | Authorised absence  |
| **N**  | Reason for absence not yet provided   | Unauthorised absence  |
| **O**  | Absence without authorisation  | Unauthorised absence  |
| **P**  | Participating in a supervised sporting activity  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **R**  | Religious observance  | Authorised absence  |
| **S**  | Study leave  | Authorised absence  |
| **T**  | Traveller absence  | Authorised absence  |
| **U**  | Arrived in school after registration closed  | Unauthorised absence  |
| **V**  | Educational visit or trip  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **W**  | Work experience  | Approved Education Activity  |
| **X**  | Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to be in school  | Not counted in possible attendances  |
| **Y**  | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances  | Not counted in possible attendances  |
| **Z**  | Prospective pupil not on admission register   | Not counted in possible attendances  |
| **#**  | Planned whole or partial school closure  | Not counted in possible attendances  |

**Roles and responsibilities over attendance:**

**Parent/Carer:**

* Ensure your child/ren attend school every day the school is open.
* Notify school each day when your child is absent giving reason for absence. (School

will decide to authorise or unauthorise the absence)

* Notify School of any changes to emergency contact details or medical issues that may

have an impact on your child’s attendance.

* Avoid taking holidays/leave of absence in term time unless there is exceptional

circumstance. Notify school at least 5 days prior and complete a leave of absence form.

* Book routine medical appointments outside of school (where possible) or bring your

child in for part of the school day when possible.

* Engage with school, attendance support and the Local Authority if your child’s attendance starts to deteriorate.
* Engage with further support offered, such as attendance support and family liaison

visits, Early help, parenting contracts and the Local Authority to prevent further legal action.

**Pupil’s will:**

* Attend school regularly.
* Arrive to school and lessons on time.
* Talk to a member of staff if you have any concerns.

**School Staff:**

* The Leadership team has overall responsibility for attendance.
* Form teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon

 session. This is a legal requirement.

* Maintain regular, efficient and accurate recordings of both admission and attendance

registers.

* Monitor pupil’s attendance and punctuality weekly to highlight and act when there is

cause for concern.

* Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken

**Attendance Officers and Attendance Team**

* Contact parents on the first day of absence, if no reason has been provided

by 9.30am and try to ascertain the reason for the absence

* Where contact has not been possible a letter may be sent to parents/carers requesting

confirmation for the reason of the absence.  (parents should respond within 5 working days)

* Ensure attendance and lateness records are up to date and that there is a mark

recorded for each session that the school is open.

* Ensure that only National Attendance codes are entered within the attendance

register.

* Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school’s electronic register

or management information system which is used to download data to the School

Census

* Refer to Education Attendance Solutions Ltd who are employed by Rosewood School

to assist and actively support with the strategic and day to management of attendance, absence and punctuality.

* Refer to ESS when the referral criteria is met.

**Governors:**

* Review school attendance data and have an accurate view of school attendance and engage in escalation procedures where appropriate.

**Attendance Incentives**

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured. Individual children Certificates are awarded at the end of each term for 100% attendance. This is celebrated in the final whole school assembly. Children who attend 100% of the last two weeks of each term are entered into a prize draw. The three wining names are issued vouchers to their parents/carers for a local supermarket.

**Individual incentives.**

The school operates a highly structured rewards system which begins with attendance. For positive attendance points are issued as followed;

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirement**  | **Frequency**  | **Points**  |
| Attend school each day   | Daily   | 1   |
| Exceed your attendance target   | As achieved   | 2   |
| Significantly improved attendance or sustained excellent attendance   | Per Term | 20   |
| Improved attitude to attendance by making better decisions   | As achieved   | 5   |

Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made.

It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child’s attendance.

 **Attendance Strategies:**

* **Weekly attendance analysis**
* **Improved attendance letter**
* **Attendance support meetings**
* **Therapy sessions**
* **Music lessons**
* **Early Help**
* **Joint working with other services**
* **Attendance certificates**
* **Attendance assemblies**
* **Interventions.**
* **Maintaining positive communication (school refuser/long term illness etc)**
* **First day absence contact**
* **Unexplained absence letter**
* **Punctuality letter**
* **Suspected holiday in term time letter**
* **Issue below 95% attendance letter**
* **Issue below 93% attendance letter (medical evidence required)**
* **Issue below 90% (persistent absence) letter**
* **Attendance clinics**
* **Home visits & safe and well checks**
* **LEA referrals**

**Punctuality and late after registration**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Regular attendance and punctuality help to instil good habits and promote the development of a positive attitude towards school. Arriving late to school is stressful for both parent and child and is not a good start to the day. Children who arrive late miss essential learning time, instructions for the lesson, disrupt the routine of the classroom and the work/progress of others.

Children should arrive between 8:45 and 9am. Anyone arriving after 9:05am should come through the main reception and will be marked as a ‘L’ which means they are late before the register has closed. The register closes at 10:00am, any child arriving after this time will be marked as a ‘U’ which is classified as an unauthorised late absence. **If unauthorised lateness persists it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.**

**Holidays in term time/leave of absence.**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child’s schooling as much as any other absence and we kindly ask parents not to take children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child’s education.

Parent/carer must **notify the school at least 5 days prior to travel** via a school leave of absence/holiday form. There have been occasions where parents have taken holiday without notifying school or said their child is off due to illness. We politely request parents are honest with school as this causes a large amount of time wasted, undertaking calls, home visits and even referrals to children missing education.

“It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, irrespective of the child’s overall attendance.  Only the head teacher (not the Local Authority) or his/her designate may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing/on an application form provided by the school.  Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the Local Authority may be requested.  When requesting a fixed penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within a 12-month period”

**There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday** and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless –

1. an application has been made in advance to the proprietor by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides: and
2. the proprietor, or a person authorised by the proprietor in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

**All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least 5 school days prior to the requested leave date.**

Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parent’s, is leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13-week holiday time would not be authorised.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on schools register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 5 day notice will result in all absence being recorded as (O) (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

If a pupil does not return to school after the leave of absence date, school will:

* Investigate the reasons surrounding the absence.
* Refer to the Local Authority and under Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil

Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

* May consider removal from the school register.

**School Absence Procedures**

**If your child is absent we will:**

* Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.

* Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Support Officer and/or a

member of the senior management team if absences persist.

* Refer the matter to our Attendance Support Officer and/or the Local Authority if

attendance moves below 95%.

**The School Attendance Officer**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together.  This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved this way, the school may discuss matters with our appointed Independent Attendance Support Officer. They will discuss matters and try to resolve the situation by agreement or may use the following strategies:

**Attendance strategies:**

* Weekly attendance analysis
* Phone call to discuss attendance concerns.
* Home visits/safe and well visits
* Parenting contract
* Improved attendance correspondence
* Attendance certificates
* Attendance assemblies
* Interventions (mentor/meet and greet)
* School Attendance Strategy Support Meeting.
* Maintaining positive communication (school refuser/long term illness etc.)
* First day absence contact
* Unexplained absence letter
* Punctuality letter
* Suspected holiday in term time letter
* Issue letters when your child’s attendance is a concern (from below 95% onwards)
* Attendance clinics
* Late gates
* LA referrals

 **Persistent Absence (P.A.)**

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Severely absent pupils are classified as those missing 50% or more of school. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

If your child reaches PA, you will be informed of this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark, below or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority through targeted support via school and with partners to try to remove the barriers of poor school attendance.

**Statutory Referrals to the Local Authority**

If your child’s attendance does not improve and unauthorised absences persist, school may refer the case to Dudley Council, Education Support Service (ESS). They are a statutory service for the enforcement of school attendance and other education related legal interventions for children in employment, children in entertainment, children missing education and elective home education. They have the legal power to issue:

* a Parenting Order
* an Education Supervision Order
* a School Attendance Order
* a fine (known as a ‘penalty notice’) of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay

within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for

your child’s absence from school.

* Prosecution in court of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence of up to 3

months.

Parents can contact the ESS themselves to ask for guidance on their procedures.  Their telephone number is 01384 814317. For general information regarding school absence, visit:

https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/education-support-service/

**Children Missing Education**

“A pupil’s name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006” (DFE 2022).

If you move out of area and the distance is too far to travel to School, **please notify school and the SEN team immediately and fill in a removal from roll form from school**.

All schools must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil’s name from the school admission register. If your child ceases to attend school and we have had no contact from parent, we will deem this as a safeguarding issue **(see Appendix 1)**. We will try to contact you and may undertake a home visit. We will then follow the Local Authority referral procedure for a child missing education before removal from roll.

**Summary**

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to guarantee as high a level of attendance as possible and that through good attendance ensure every child’s welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

**Contacts:**

School office: 01384 816800

Attendance Lead: Mrs S Cope

**Review**

 This policy will be reviewed according to the schedule for policy review.

 Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors   Date: September 2023

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**Appendix 1:  Safeguarding Children Missing Education Process**

Day One: The school identifies that a child is not in school. A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child’s home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent/carer that the child is safe at home.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcome of Call**  | **Action**  |
| There is no answer at the home or on mobile Numbers  | Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours Continue process each day. Send absence letter every day. Call Social Worker or Youth Offending Team.    |
|  The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them  | Ask for reason for absence and record  |
| The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe  | **The school’s designated lead for child protection** should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child  |
| The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned  | School to advise the parent to: **Contact the local police station to inform** them that the child is missing **Contact all people and places the child is** known to talk to and visit. Inform them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which **may shed light on the child’s whereabouts** or actively searing for the child  **Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres** near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment **Report back to school if the child is found** or remains missing  |

If the judgment on Day One is that there is reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm the school will contact Police and/or children’s social care immediately.

If the judgment on Day One is that there is no reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm school continues to make enquiries and informs Education Inclusion & Partnership on Day Ten that the child is missing education.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria**  | **Risk**  |   | **Action**  |
| Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of crime? |   |   |   |
|  |   |   |
| Does the child have a formal child protection plan?  |   |   |   |
| Is the child in care i.e. looked after by the local authority?  |   |   |   |
| Is the planned or current LA children’s social care or LA  |   |   |   |
| adults’ social care services involved? e.g. section 47 enquiry about to start  |   | Inform Police and/or children’s social  |
|   |   | care immediately  |
| Is there a person present in or visiting the family who poses  |   |   |   |
| an on-going risk to children, or who is suspected of  |   |   |
| previously harming a child?  |   |   |
| Is the child at risk of sexual exploitation?  |   |   |   |
| Is the child at risk of radicalisation?  |   |   |   |
| Has there been LA children’s social care or LA adults/ social care or Criminal Justice System involvement in the past?  |   |   |   |
|  |   |   | Give consideration to the vulnerability  |
| Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the  |   |   | of the child and following risk  |
| child is at risk? e.g. FMG or forced marriage.  |   | assessment inform one or all of the  |
|   |   | following:  |
| Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?  |   |
|   |   | •  | Police  |
| Is there any known history of domestic violence?  |   |
| Is there concern about the parent/carer’s ability to protect the child from harm?  |   |   | •  | Safer School Officer  |
|   |   |   |   |
| Was there any significant incident prior to the child’s  |   |   | •  | Children’s Social Care  |
| unexplained absence?  |   |   |
| Has the child been a victim of bullying?  |   |   | * Local Authority Designated Officer
 |
| Does the child need essential medical or health care?  |   |   |   |   |
| Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child’s  |   |   | •  | Education Welfare Service  |
| unexplained absence?  |   |   |   |
| Has the child gone missing with their family?  |   |   | •  | School Nurse  |
| Have the parents been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?  |   |   |  Use other services to help with your  |
|   |
|   |   | risk assessment, including the above.  |
| Is there a history or poor attendance?  |   |
| Has there been any change in the child/family’s financial  |   |   |   |
| circumstances?  |   |   |
| Age of the child  |   |   |   |

School Risk Assessment for Child Missing Education

Assessing vulnerability requires a combination of professional knowledge and experience of child welfare issues and knowledge of local circumstances. Considering the following questions could assist the process.  If in doubt always consult with managers or other services.