



Rednock School

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Quality, Partnership, Success

# Attendance Policy

**Approved by:** Full Governing Body

**Date:** July 2021

**Last reviewed on:** January 2020

**Next review due by:** July 2022

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### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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 \(Student Registration\) \(England\) 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 body

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### 3.2 The Head Teacher

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The Head Teacher 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 students
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head Teacher
- Works with Parent Engagement Officer to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Head Teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.4 Tutors**

Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.5 School admin staff**

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence or forward the call or information to the attendance officer.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students 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 student 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students should arrive in school by 08:30 to be able to arrive punctually at morning registration at 08:40. Students should not be in school prior to 8:00

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:40 and will be kept open until 09:15. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:20 and will be kept open until 12:40.

## **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:30 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents should call the school on every day of the student's absence giving the reason for absence on the absence line: 01453 540755 or alternatively leave a text message on : 07943 108483

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 student'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 student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

Where such appointments are unavoidable the school should be informed in advance if at all possible. Appointment cards should be shown to tutors and then to the receptionist prior to signing out of school. A 'present' mark may still be awarded if the student attends for as much of a session (morning / afternoon) as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than miss a whole day.

The student'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 student 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

If a student is persistently late to school action will be taken by the community team. This will be in the form of punctuality report cards which will be linked to sanctions and rewards, support mentoring to try and solve the problem or break the cycle and the use of lunchtime detentions to make up the time.

## **4.5 Following up absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by initially sending a text message requesting information. The information given will be recorded on the system to inform the student's tutor. If a parent does not respond to the text request we will follow this up via a phone call or email from the child's tutor, a member of their community team or a member of the attendance team.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents can access their child's attendance total on a daily basis through the MyEd app. However, the school will all

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head Teacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Requests should be made using the form found in Appendix 3.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision

### 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school takes a staged approach to tackling persistent absence. The school's philosophy is to work with the student and the parents in a holistic yet robust manner from a solution focused perspective. The school's aim in the process is not to be punitive but to find resolutions; however high quality attendance will lead to high quality education

This is set out in appendix 4

However the school also works closely with students and families to prevent attendance from becoming a problem in a preemptive manner. The use of attendance targets, clean sheets, incentives and rewards alongside mentoring are in place to prevent persistent absence becoming an issue

### 5.3 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 Head Teacher, 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 student 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.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Rednock School has a number of strategies for promoting positive attendance

- Individual Student attendance targets
- Clean Sheets reward scheme
- Incentives and rewards
- Staff and peer mentoring
- Celebratory events

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors student absence on a daily basis.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

The parent is expected to call the school on each morning of ill health

If a student's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-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 board.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the member of SLT responsible for attendance. 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 for Learning policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness

<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student 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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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 student is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Appendix 2

[Attendance Information for Parents](#)

Appendix 3

[Leave of Absence Request](#)

## Appendix 4

### ATTENDANCE – MONITORING & INTERVENTION STRATEGY

