Rednock School

Quality, Partnership, Success

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Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	**Date:**	July 2023
Last reviewed on:	June 2022		
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Aims and Objectives

At Rednock School we believe that Everybody Matters and that each child's regular attendance at school can make a fundamental difference to their success now and in the future.

We believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, students, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect students to be in school for every session of the school day, and for every day that the school is open to them.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

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](#)

- [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.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:15 am 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 one emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

    Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

- Attend every timetabled session on time

The Governing Body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies

- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual students or cohorts who need it most

- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance

- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

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 students

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having an oversight of data analysis

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Communicating messages to students and parents

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.

The school attendance team are responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- Working with school staff to tackle persistent absence

- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Community leaders are responsible for

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data for students within their community

- Ensuring that attendance is a weekly focus within the community tutor team and that tutors are having proactive conversations with their tutees

- Celebrating positive attendance from students

- Working with the wider school team, students and parents to tackle persistent absence

Community tutors are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information no later than 10 minutes after the start of am registration

- Having regular conversations with their tutor group about their attendance targets

- Supporting their tutees alongside their families to overcome barriers to attendance

Raising Standards Leaders are responsible for

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data within their year group setting

- Supporting allocated student groups to improve their attendance

- Working alongside the wider school team, students and parents to tackle persistent absence

Teaching staff are responsible for

- Recording lesson attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information no later than 10 minutes after the start of the lesson

- Raising concerns in a timely manner with the community team about the impact a students absence may be having on their academic progress

- Supporting students to catch up and understand the work set when they have had a period of absence from school

School administration/office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system

- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present

- Absent

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not

- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a student 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.

Students must arrive in school by 8:30 am on each day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 08:40 am and will be kept open until 09:30 am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12:20pm and will be kept open until 12:30pm.

Absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 09:30 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 01453 540755 or text 0790 8661525

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.

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

Students' punctuality to school and lesson time will be monitored on a weekly basis by their tutor and any concerns raised with the student in the first instance and then the parent/carer if they are ongoing.

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.

   Please contact the school via your child's tutor and the attendance team to let them know in advance where possible.

   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.

● The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

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 two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form accessible here. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
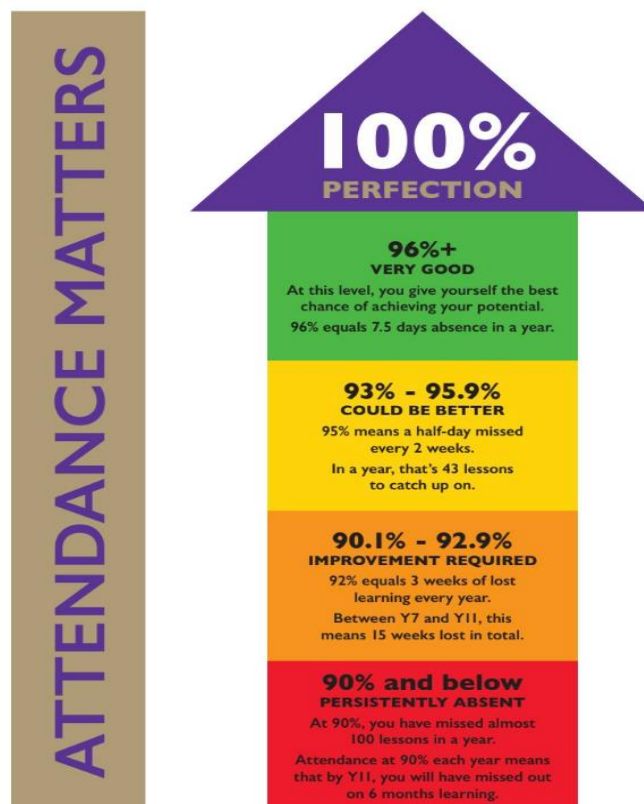
Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

● Illness and medical/dental appointments

● 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

Procedures following unexplained absence

- The attendance team will contact the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may enact our missing child protocols and come to their house where possible or contact an external agency such as children's services or the police.

- 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

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will request a meeting in person with the parent/carer or in some cases make a home visit to support the removal of any barriers facing the family.

Strategies for promoting attendance

School staff will regularly discuss the importance of very good attendance with individuals and groups. This will be done at least weekly in community time, regularly as part of assemblies and ongoing through the academic year as part of lesson feedback. Attendance matters posters are displayed in each tutor room and are used in the dialogue with students when they consider how their attendance stands in relation to where it should be. Students will have personal attendance targets which will be monitored by their community teams and when they meet these they will be congratulated and rewarded. These targets will be adapted every term so that they have the incentive to continuously improve as the year progresses.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

100%
PERFECTION

96%+
VERY GOOD
At this level, you give yourself the best chance of achieving your potential.
96% equals 7.5 days absence in a year.

93% - 95.9%
COULD BE BETTER
95% means a half-day missed every 2 weeks.
In a year, that's 43 lessons to catch up on.

90.1% - 92.9%
IMPROVEMENT REQUIRED
92% equals 3 weeks of lost learning every year.
Between Y7 and Y11, this means 15 weeks lost in total.

90% and below
PERSISTENTLY ABSENT
At 90%, you have missed almost 100 lessons in a year.
Attendance at 90% each year means that by Y11, you will have missed out on 6 months learning.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels via school reports and edulink

- Monitor attendance and absence data across the school and at an individual student level

- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

    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.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

- Provide regular attendance reports to all school staff working directly with students to facilitate discussions with students 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

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students 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

- Hold regular internal panel meetings to consider how else the student and family can be supported to improve their attendance by removing the barriers they may be facing to attend

- Use the Gloucestershire Graduated Pathway with all students in school having at least a My Profile document to help identify issues and concerns early so that they can been intervened with and supported by staff

- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school can request Gloucestershire County Council to issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct [Attendance - Schoolsnet (gloucestershire.gov.uk)](https://gloucestershire.gov.uk)

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £60 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £120 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or student

Any person who has care of a child or student ie lives with and looks after the child

Links to other policies

Behaviour

Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Children with needs that cannot attend school

Home School Agreement

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the senior team on an annual basis and its implementation will be monitored by the Outcomes, performance and experience governors committee

Appendix 1 (See below)

Attendance Monitoring and intervention Strategy

Appendix 1

Attendance Monitoring and intervention Strategy

<u>Initial Concern</u>

When a student's attendance falls below 95% (or 93% in term 1) the students tutor will discuss attendance concerns with the students during a 1:1 mentoring session.

When attendance falls below 93% (or 90% in a term), a letter will be sent by the Parent Engagement Officer to the student's parents and there will be a review period of 4 weeks.

Where there have been 4 or more unauthorised absences, or attendance falls below 90%, during the review period, the student will be progressed to stage 1.

<u>Stage 1</u>

A letter is sent to the students' parents by the Parent Engagement Officer. A student Attendance Agreement will be agreed between the student and the Parent Engagement Officer. There will be a review period of 4 - 6 weeks. If during the review period there are 4 or more unauthorised absences or attendance falls below 90%, during the review period, the student will be progressed to stage 2.

<u>Stage 2</u>

A letter is sent to the student's parents by the Parent Engagement Officer, who will arrange a home visit and/or a meeting with the students' parents in the school. Medical evidence will be required to authorise any further absence due to illness. There will be a review period of 4 - 6 weeks. If during the review period there are 4 or more unauthorised absences, or attendance falls below 90%, and/or pre-arranged home visits are unsuccessful, the student will be progressed to Stage 3.

<u>Stage 3</u>

A letter is sent to the students' parents from the Parent Engagement Officer inviting them to an Attendance Improvement Meeting. The first review after the meeting will be carried out 4 - 6 weeks.

A total of 28 or more unauthorised absences or 20 continuous unauthorised absences will result in the student moving to stage 4.

<u>Stage 4</u>

A referral will be made to the Local Authority and a request for legal proceedings will be commenced against the parents will be made.

A student can be placed on any of the above stages without having moved from stage to stage, depending upon need. A student does not need to have been placed on all stages of the procedure before a referral is made to the Local Authority.