Rednock School 6th Form Attendance policy

Approved by	: Mike Stratford	Date: September 2024
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Contents

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to 6th Form 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 student has access to the education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students 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 from the Department for Education (DfE) in relation to the keeping of registers and funding regulations for post-16 education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Head of 6th Form

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- 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 when earlier interventions have been unsuccessful

3.2 The Deputy Head of 6ᵗʰ Form

The Deputy Head of 6ᵗʰ Form with responsibility for attendance (LNJ) is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the 6ᵗʰ Form
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues when earlier interventions have been unsuccessful
- Monitoring expectations and processes as carried out by 6ᵗʰ Form tutors

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring absence and notifying parents if a student has not arrived at school
- Updating records when notified of illness or absence from school

3.4 The 6ᵗʰ Form Administrator

The 6ᵗʰ Form administrator is responsible for:

- Monitoring absence and producing a weekly report for tutors to support them in analysing attendance
- Updating attendance records when notified of illness or absence from school

3.5 6ᵗʰ Form Tutors

6ᵗʰ Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via Edulink or SIMs during morning registration time.
- Monitoring absence using the weekly report provided for tutors
- Notifying the Attendance Officer or 6ᵗʰ Form Administrator when notified of illness or absence from school
- Following the procedures outlined in the attached process when attendance falls below 95%

3.6 6ᵗʰ Form Subject Teachers and Heads of Department

6ᵗʰ Form subject teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance every lesson, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via Edulink or SIMs.
- Liaising with 6ᵗʰ Form Tutors where there are concerns about attendance to check if there are interventions already in place.
- Following the procedures outlined in the attached process when attendance to their lessons (but not overall attendance to school) falls below 95%
- Notifying Head of Department if attendance to their lessons falls below 80%

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Supporting their team with meetings and interventions as per the attached process

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or text the school's attendance line to report their child's absence before 9am 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 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time, including morning tutor time.
- Where possible, make medical/dental appointments and driving tests outside school time
- Arrange driving lessons outside of school time or during OS (off site) privilege time.

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 also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Students must arrive in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.05. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.20pm and will be kept open until 12.50pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling or texting the school absence line.

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 or driving test (but not lessons) 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 such 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 student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

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

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Text the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- 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
- Text the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via the reporting system (3 times per year) via email or phone call where there are concerns.

4.7 Staff absence

Where any teacher is absent from school students are expected to:

- Report to the Study Supervisor in the 6th Form atrium who will register them on behalf of the teacher, ensure they know what work they should complete and will support the students with the work.
- Students are not permitted to work from home if their teacher is not in school.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Head of 6th Form 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 Head of 6th Form'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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the website. The Head of 6th Form 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)
- Study leave
- Work experience
- 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 Funding implications for long term/persistent absence

- ESFA will not fund students with four week's consecutive absence from school without medical notification: An institution may continue to record funding for reasonable student absences of up to 4 consecutive weeks (28 days) if the student continues in learning after the absence. Institutions must withdraw students from their programmes if they do not return to learning after being absent for 4 weeks. ESFA does not distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence for funding purposes. (source: DfE Funding Guidance for Young People 2022/23)
- The school may make the decision not to pay for public examinations for any students whose attendance is below 80% (where there is no medical evidence in place).
- Financial support may be withdrawn, in the case of persistent absence (below 90%), for those students in receipt of a bursary under the 16-19 student bursary scheme.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Clean sheets: all students with 100% attendance and no missed deadlines in that week are rewarded (appropriate rewards to be agreed with the 6th Form Student Council)
- Off Site privilege: Students may choose to work from home for periods 4 and 5 if they do not have lessons on any given day. All students must attend morning tutor time and periods 1-3 regardless of their timetable. If they do not have a lesson they must register with the Study Supervisor in the atrium. This privilege will be withdrawn if attendance falls below expected levels, in line with the attached process or when there are concerns about a student's ability to manage their time effectively.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The 6th Form Team will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

7.2 Analysing attendance

The 6th Form Team will:

- 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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Tutors and other school leaders, 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

7.4 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 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
- Follow the procedures outlined in the attached processes documents.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student 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 student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Processes for monitoring and interventions for overall attendance to 6th Form

Stage 1
Initial concern that attendance is falling below expectations

- Email sent to student and parents/carers by tutor via Edulink and linked to SIMS communication log.
- Logged on UniFrog as an interaction

Stage 2
Stage 1 interventions have not had impact

- Phone call home made by Tutor and record of discussion confirmed via Edulink email and linked to SIMS communication log.
- Logged on UniFrog as an interaction
- Form tutor to monitor closely
- Withdrawal of Off Site privileges for a minimum of two weeks.

Stage 3

- Parental/carer meeting with Deputy Head of 6th (LNJ) and My Plan set up (if appropriate).
- Logged on UniFrog as an teraction
- Attendance report and weekly meeting with Deputy Head of 6th for 4 weeks.
- Withdrawal of Off Site privileges for a minimum of two weeks.

Stage 4

- Parental/carer meeting with Head of 6th Form and record of discussion logged on student's file.
- Attendance report and weekly meeting with Head of 6th Form for 4 weeks.
- Withdrawal of Off Site privileges until sustained improvement seen (minimum 4 weeks).

Stage 5

- Review with Head of 6th Form and Deputy Head and formal letter to student parents/carer outlining actions and expectations as well as possible consequences.
- Attendance report and weekly meeting with Head of 6th Form for 4 weeks.
- Withdrawal of Off Site) privileges.

Attendance to lessons in an individual subject

| Attendance falls below 95% | → | • Email sent to student, parents/carers and Tutor by teacher via Edulink and linked to SIMS communication log. |

| Attendance falls below 92% | → | • Phone call home made by teacher and record of discussion confirmed via Edulink email and linked to SIMS communication log.
• Teacher to monitor closely. |

| Attendance falls below 90% | → | • Parental/carer meeting with teacher and actions agreed.
• Details of actions and monitoring confirmed via Edulink email to student, parents/carers, Tutor and Deputy Head of 6th with responsibility for attendance (LNJ). |

| Attendance falls below 80% | → | • Parental/carer meeting with Head of Department and Teacher. Actions agreed e.g. contract and information confirmed via Edulink email to student, parents/carers and Head of 6th Form. |

| Attendance falls below 70% | → | • Review with Head of 6th Form and Head of Department. Formal letter to student parents/carer outlining actions and expectations as well as possible consequences. |