



Attendance Policy

Date	Amendment
Sept 2017	Changes have been made to reflect latest guidance on attendance.
Feb 2018	P1: Changes to the trigger percentage from 85% to 90%
Sept 2018	Changes to attendance procedures
Sept 2020	COVID update
November 2021	Changes to authorising leave of absence and attendance procedures
April 2023	More detail added to attendance procedures
October 2023	Changes made to reflect changes in EWO service

INTRODUCTION

At Rose Wood Academy, we believe that every child should be supported and challenged to reach their full potential, both academically and socially. In order for this to happen, all children need to attend school regularly. Achieving good school attendance and punctuality needs school and parents to work together to ensure that every child has the very best start in life.

Good attendance and punctuality helps children achieve academically, gain self – confidence, develop a sense of belonging and maintain friendships. Good attendance means developing an understanding of responsibility and reliability which will help children through their teenage years and into adulthood, particularly in their working lives. We firmly believe we are starting the formation of habits for life when setting attendance and punctuality patterns for children from the earliest point of their education.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every child has the right to a good education and this cannot happen without regular and punctual attendance. Ensuring good attendance is everyone's business.

The board of trustees has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff appropriate to their role.
- Working with the senior leadership team (SLT) to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to lead on attendance. At Rose Wood the senior leader for attendance is Miss L. Carney, alongside Mr P Cowley. They can be contacted via the school office.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.

- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and early action to address emerging patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any attendance and/or welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register accurately at the relevant times during the school day.

The Education Welfare Officer and attendance leads at school are responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

The school's Parent Support Adviser is available daily to support and advise parents on matters including where issues are impacting on school attendance. The school has a Service Level Agreement with Education Five Ltd, an independent Education Welfare Company which supports school with improving attendance including where necessary enforcement action. The school's allocated Education Welfare Officer is Anne-Marie Cartwright. She can be contacted via the school office or by emailing contact@educationfive.co.uk.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details including more than one emergency contact number.
- The attendance and punctuality of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Avoiding taking children out of school for non-emergency appointments
- Avoiding taking holidays in term time
- Communicating any reasons for absence to the school at the earliest opportunity and in any event before 9.15am on each day of absence.

PROCEDURES FOR ATTENDANCE (INCLUDING FOR *NURSERY CHILDREN):

School have a safeguarding duty to account for all children during the school day. Phone calls, home visits and signing in and out systems are necessary in order to ensure all children are safeguarded. We expect that parents will support us in this duty.

- If a child is absent from school for any reason, it is the parent's responsibility to inform school by 9.15am by telephone or in person. Please do not email or use class Dojo as these systems are not monitored in the same way.
- If the reason for absence is known in advance, e.g. a holiday in term time or medical appointment, the parent must inform the school before the first day of absence.
- In the event of a child being absent without explanation from the parents/carers, school will make rigorous checks to ensure the child is safe. In the first instance, school will contact the primary contact on the child's data collection sheet. School will then continue through the list of contacts until confirmation of the child's safety and reason for absence is established. If school exhausts the contacts without success, a home visit will be undertaken. School may, in some cases, do a home visit at an earlier point than this if we can't make contact with those who live in the child's home. If school are concerned further, the EWO, Children's Social Care and/or the Police may be informed.
- In line with Middlesbrough's Educational Welfare Service's Children Missing Education Policy, if a child is missing school for 10 consecutive days without explanation, they will be treated as a child missing education; this is investigated by Middlesbrough EWS. N.B. This does not include nursery children. Children missing education procedures can lead to a child losing their school place if they are absent without explanation.
- If a child continues to be absent without contact, school will continue to pursue contact and will try to confirm where the child is through all links known to the family: this may also involve reporting to EWS, Children's Social Care or the police.

*Nursery children's attendance is non - statutory and therefore referrals would not be made to the Education Welfare Service. However, for safeguarding reasons, they must still be accounted for if absent. Therefore, the above procedure still applies.

PROCEDURES FOR LATENESS (including for Nursery children):

- School doors open at 8.45 am and close at 8.55 am.
- If a child arrives after 8:55 am but before 9.30am, they will receive a "late mark", shown in the register as an L code.

- If they arrive after 9.30am, pupils will receive a mark of unauthorised absence if they do not attend school before this time. The mark (U code) will record that the pupil is in school for purposes of health and safety.
- In all circumstances of lateness, the parent must sign the child in using the Entry Sign – in System. Parents must record the name of the child and give an accurate reason for the lateness.

AUTHORISING LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers may determine the number of days a child can be away from school if leave is granted for exceptional circumstances.

All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent or carer on the appropriate form as leave cannot be authorised retrospectively. Applications should be received to the school at least two weeks in advance of the leave being taken.

At Rose Wood Academy, exceptional circumstances and length of absence have been determined as:

- In the case of the terminal illness of a close member of the family (no set time)
- Death of a close family member
- Pupils with parents in the forces (10 days)
- Marriage of parent
- Absences for important religious observances.

Leave of absence during term time is at the Head Teacher's discretion and should not be considered a parental right.

Shift patterns or holiday allocations from work are not classed as exceptional circumstances.

Decisions made in relation to leave of absence, whether granted or not, will be applied equitably and consistently.

The Head Teacher may ask for parents to make an appointment to discuss the request.

Parents will receive a written reply to all requests, which states whether or not the application has been successful.

If the application is not granted, the reasons for this will be stated in the letter. The reply will also remind parents of the consequences of disregarding the refusal.

If the application is successful, the length of authorised absence will be stated, along with the date that the child will be expected back in school. The consequences if the child is not back in school by the expected date will be made clear to parents.

PENALTY NOTICES

If parents have received a refusal from the Head Teacher following a request for leave in term time, and they decide to still take the unauthorised leave of absence it is likely they will be issued with a penalty notice fine.

The penalty notice is £60 per parent, per child and is payable within 21 days of issue by the local authority. The fine increases to £120 per parent per child if paid between the 22nd and 29th day. If the penalty notice is not paid or where multiple holidays have been taken in the same school year parents can be prosecuted by the local authority.

ILLNESS AND HEALTHCARE APPOINTMENTS

Parents are expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable, sharing the appointment notification or letter with the school. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment as their child should be in attendance at school before and after the appointment where practicable.

SEND AND HEALTH RELATED ABSENCES

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will endeavour to secure additional support from external partners to help boost attendance and engagement in education where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such

plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Education Welfare Officer, supported by the Attendance Leads and PSA will:

Implement attendance procedures in accordance with local authority guidance including

- Sending letters to parents.
- Conducting home visits and telephone contacts to discuss reasons for absence and resolve any presenting difficulties
- Having regular meetings between the Attendance Lead and EWO to discuss pupils whose attendance is causing concern and also to review attendance statistics.
- Commencing where deemed appropriate attendance procedures to enforce school attendance.
- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Using fixed penalty notices.

The Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Lead will also regularly review the effectiveness of any procedures or interventions put into place to improve attendance.

The school will use attendance data, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in a variety of age appropriate ways.

WORKING WITH PARENTS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

The school will work to encourage and develop strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school, attendance and punctuality so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services, School Health.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

A pupil will be considered a persistent absentee if they miss more than 10% of their education no matter what the reason for absence. This therefore includes absence due to holidays in term time (whether agreed or not) and illness absence.

Should a pupil have rates of absence over 50 percent, the school will work with other key agencies including social care where deemed appropriate so that a multi agency approach can be taken to support the child to access their education.

The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe persistent absence following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

MONITORING AND ANALYSING ABSENCE

The Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Lead will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of persistent absence.

The board of trustees will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

STAFF TRAINING

The board of trustees will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.