

RUSHEY GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Date: March 2018

Date Reviewed:

Seen by Governors:

We believe that children can reach their full potential only by receiving full-time education, through regular and structured attendance. Rushey Green expects all pupils to arrive and leave school punctually and we emphasise this to parents. All staff are concerned for the children's welfare and happiness and everyone plays a part in promoting regular attendance among the pupils. However, children should not attend school if they are unwell.

Aims

- To foster a climate where the school community, teachers, parents and pupils, values regular attendance and punctuality.
- To provide a framework with agreed roles and responsibilities.
- To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils.
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, including set procedures for attendance information.
- To develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data.
- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce unauthorised absence.
- To implement a system for rewards and sanctions.
- To promote effective partnership with the Attendance Welfare Officer and other agencies.
- To use learning mentors to facilitate the improvement of attendance and punctuality.

Communication

The importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained at the Pre-school Induction Meetings held each year for children about to enter Reception Class. This reiterates that parents and children should arrive at school on time, so that each child can be given the best possible start to the school day. It is also stressed that young children particularly should be collected promptly, as they can become upset if left behind on their own. Parents are asked to share any worries that their child might have in school. Parents need to be aware that even little things can upset children, which means that they might become unhappy and might not want to come to school.

Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various Year Groups. All parents requesting a place are asked to make an appointment with the Head Teacher. At this meeting, the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted, together with other school routines. A home visit is also carried out by an Assistant Headteacher and the Admin Assistant.

At this Induction Meeting, parents are requested to arrange their family holidays within the school holidays, rather than in term time. At Rushey Green, we prefer that family holidays should be taken during school holidays, so that a child's education is not disrupted.

Parents are reminded in the Newsletter that they should not take their children out of school unnecessarily for holidays or visits. A copy of this policy can be found on the Schools Website. The Head Teacher contacts those parents who frequently take the family holiday in term time and reminds them of the disruption to their child's education. This is followed up by a phone call and a letter from an Assistant Headteacher and the Admin Assistant.

At Rushey Green Primary School, parents are asked to complete a request form for leave of absence.

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

Penalty notices (fines) will be issued by the Local Authority to each parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. (£60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.)

Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents. All parents should contact Rushey Green if their child will be absent or late. A telephone call is acceptable; all telephone messages are logged on our data system under the headings: Date, Child, Class, and Reason for Absence. Alternatively, when their child returns, parents should send a letter to school explaining the absence. All information is used for Class Registers. If no notification is received about a child's absence, the Admin Assistant will contact the parent/guardian by telephone on the first morning of absence.

Registration

Rushey Green uses a computerised registration system and the Register is completed in the morning and afternoon. A pupil will receive a late mark after 9.05am. All pupils who are late must report to the office.

The Admin Assistant is responsible for collating Attendance Records in school and notifies the Head Teacher and Assistant Headteacher if there is any reason for concern. At the end of the year, each child's attendance is analysed and a copy is given to parents with their child's School Report.

Promoting Good attendance and Punctuality

The School day begins at 8.50am. Children should arrive by 8.45am to prepare for a prompt start. KS1 and KS2 school day ends at 3.15pm.

Parents are reminded that children need to be collected on time.

Concerns

The Attendance records are regularly examined. If there is a frequent pattern of absence, a member of staff will telephone the parents to ascertain the reason for persistent absence. If there are concerns about a child's non-attendance or lateness, the Admin Assistant consults the Head Teacher/Assistant Headteacher immediately. Details of attendance or late percentage are extracted from the computer database. The Head Teacher/Assistant Headteacher shows this to the parent(s) during an informal discussion.

If absences or lateness persist, the Admin Assistant contacts the Education and Welfare Officer (EWO). If the situation needs discussing before a home visit, the EWO will consult the Assistant Headteacher who will complete the School Attendance Intervention forms.

The EWO meets the Assistant Headteacher/Admin Assistant each term to discuss attendance issues offering action, advice and support.

If a child that is on the Child Protection Register, or is a Looked after Child or is a vulnerable child and they do not attend school, the Admin Assistant will ring the child's home in the first instance and then inform the Head Teacher of non-attendance. The LA also contacts the school on a daily basis to check attendance of Looked after Children. The Education and Welfare Service are notified if there is an issue with non-attendance. Non-attendance linked to safeguarding issues is reported to the Headteacher immediately.

Children that attend an alternative provision will be regularly monitored for attendance and attainment.

Our procedures for improving attendance may be used for any child falling below 90% attendance and who fails to improve. A penalty notice will be issued and the parents/guardians may be fined.

Absence through Illness

Rushey Green continues to provide as much education as the child's medical condition allows to keep up the momentum of their learning.

Rushey Green monitors attendance of those pupils who are absent from school because of short-term or chronic illness and close links are maintained with parents/guardians. Educational support, including the provision of work and materials are provided for those pupils with medical conditions who are absent from school for more than 3 days. The teaching staff liaises with parents so that, during prolonged absence, pupils receive suitable work for their age and ability group.

The reintegration of children into school after a long absence through ill health is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including the Class Teacher and Teaching Assistants, meet to discuss the return to school. Friends and other pupils are encouraged to help the child settle back in school. Extra support is provided (subject to available resources) after an analysis of the child's needs.

Authorised Absences

If a child has a genuine illness and there is risk of infection to others parents/guardians should notify the school on day of absence between 8.00am and 9.00am.

Where a child will be absent for days of religious observance, notification is required in advance.

All other absences will be seen as unauthorised.

Truancy

All staff at Rushey Green believe in the importance of continuity in every child's learning. Staff are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although truancy is very rare at Rushey Green, if staff are suspicious that a child might be playing truant, action is taken immediately.

If truancy is suspected, the Head Teacher and the EWO is notified. Parents/Guardians are contacted either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents to bring their child to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved. If the Head Teacher is unable to talk to the parent/guardians, he or she talks to the child to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If problems are identified, these are discussed and resolved with the class teacher/member of staff/other pupils.

At Rushey Green, we endeavour to discover, through discussion with the individual pupils, classes and School Council Meetings, what the children like and dislike about school. The staff consider the children's opinions and, if possible, adjustments are made to teaching and learning procedures and the school environment.

Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

Assemblies

The Headteacher talks to the children in a school Assembly. Individual Assemblies on everyday matters relate to attendance, such as, time-keeping, excuses, illness, what Rushey Green can and cannot change.

Class Organisation/Lessons

- Lessons on telling the time.
- Positive support for those pupils who have been absent for a significant period – planned reintegration as necessary.

- Class / Children's Council discussions on feelings, likes and dislikes about school.
- Pupil questionnaires

Rewards

- Weekly attendance and punctuality prize – winning class keeps cup for week.
- Certificates are presented to those children with full attendance during the term.
- At the end of every year all children with 100% attendance receive a certificate and voucher.

Additional Policy for Schools with High Levels of Absence

Pupils who have not arrived by 10am, and for whom no message of explanation has been received, are followed up immediately. The parents are telephoned at home/at work/on their mobile phone until someone responds. High-level absence results in referral to Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and reviewed by an attendance panel.

Further Information

Useful Documents and Resources

DfES Consultation on the Education of Sick Children 2001

DfES LEA Behaviour Support Plans (Circular 1/98)

DfES/Home Office Social Inclusion: Pupil Support (Circular 10/99)

DfES Tackling Truancy Together