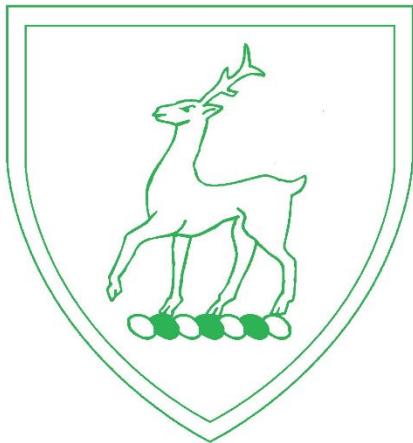


ATTENDANCE POLICY



THE
Raleigh
SCHOOL

Review Date: Spring 2024

Next Review Date: Spring 2025

1. Policy Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school 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 pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils 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 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 \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

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 pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting penalty notices to be issued, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- 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
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention re-intergration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Anna Chalk and can be contacted via 01483 282988 and info.raleigh@sfet.org.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- 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 inclusion officers (IO) to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Lesley Light and can be contacted via 01483 282988 or info.raleigh@sfet.org.uk

3.5 Class teachers

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

3.6 Admin Office

The admin office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. In addition, listen to voicemails left on the dedicated school absence line.

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the designated senior leader/Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the beginning of the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent (either authorised or unauthorised)

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.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9:00am The register for the second session will be taken at 1.10pm and will be kept open until 1:15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school either in person, by telephone or via the dedicated absence line on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:50am or as soon as practically possible.

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 pupil'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 pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The school will ask for proof of the any appointment.

Families are expected to complete the application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances form (appendix 2) located in the drawers in the front entrance hall.

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

The pupil'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 pupil who arrives late after the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Registers are taken at 08:50am and a pupil arriving after 08:50am but before 09:30am will be marked as late (L code). If a pupil arrives after 09:30am they will be marked as late (U code) which counts as an unauthorised absence.

Families will receive a late letter once their child has been late on 3 or more occasions. Further punctuality reminder letters will be sent out when they have been late 6, 9 or 12 times.

4.5 Following up absence

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

- Call the pupil'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 pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact C-SPA/the police to apply appropriate safeguarding actions.
- 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 consider involving the Inclusion Officer

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. Every child's attendance figure is shared on their annual report. If we are concerned about a child's attendance, this will be discussed with the parent by the class teacher at their Parent's Evening consultation meeting, twice annually.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. A application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances form must be completed and returned to the admin office. (appendix 2)

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

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 pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

Children's attendance is monitored on a weekly basis and when a child's attendance becomes a concern a letter of concern is sent to the children's family. If we remain concerned, we inform parents that they need to provide medical evidence in order for any absences to be marked as authorised.

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. The Local Authority can also prosecute parents under s 444 (1) and s 444 (1A) Education Act 1996, or apply for an Education Supervision Order.

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.

6. Penalty Notices

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

6.1 Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued

Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without authority of the Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Service will be factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of the register without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

We celebrate attendance during our celebration assembly by awarding the class who has the highest attendance for that week with a class certificate and the 'making attendance count (MAC)' class mascot. This information is shared with our whole school community via our newsletter.

- We award children with 1 house point if they attend school, 100% of the time, per half term.
- Children who have attended 100% of the school year (39 school weeks) are awarded with 39 house points at the end of each academic year.
- Half termly, during a whole school assembly, we discuss the importance of attending school so children are aware of the importance of it.

8. Attendance monitoring

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

A pupil'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).

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the inclusion officer (IO).

Attendance of the whole school is tracked and monitored on a weekly basis to help us:

- Support the well-being of our pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

Pupil-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.

8.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to pupils and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils 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

8.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold meetings with the parents/carers of pupils 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
- Involve the Inclusion Officer to support individual families.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by Trustees and Governors.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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 pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

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

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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Appendix 2: request for absence form

THE RALEIGH SCHOOL

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully and please ensure you complete both sides of this form

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more will result in the issue of a Penalty Notice

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Name of child:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	

Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO	
If YES, please give dates and details:	
I also have children at...	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:
Address :	

To be completed by the Headteacher		
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we will be requesting the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice per parent/carers per child.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed: (Headteacher)		Date: