

Pupil Attendance Policy

Introduction

We believe that every child needs to be given the best opportunity to achieve at school. We believe that good school attendance is necessary for this.

If a child is often absent from school it has a deleterious effect on his/her development, academic progress and levels of concentration and motivation as well as causing disruption to the rest of the class. It is a simple exercise to see that:

90% attendance over a school year = 4 weeks' absence that year;

90% attendance over 5 years of schooling = half a year's absence (20 weeks);

90% attendance over a 10 year school career = one year of missed education (40 wks)

We believe it is our duty to do all we can to enforce good attendance and encourage parents to consider the effects of school absence on their children's welfare.

This policy has been written with reference to the statutory regulations detailed in School attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, DfE, October 2014. This is based on the following statutory instruments:

The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Procedures

Teaching Assistants in all classes, or in their absence the class teacher, take the register each day in the morning and in the afternoon.

The morning register closes at 8.30am and the afternoon register closes at 1.30pm.

Any child coming to school after this time will be entered as an unauthorised absence and their attendance logged by admin on the electronic register and printed register to facilitate headcounts and register in the event of fire drills and the like.

Registers must be taken before going upstairs to assemblies and on Thursday mornings, in the playground/park, before entering the school building, and digitised upon entry to school after tag rugby.

The codes used in registers are depicted in appendix A to this policy.

By weekly examination of attendance register data, the School Attendance Officer will flag pupils whose absence hits the thresholds listed in section 3. She/he will then issue a letter to the parents of such children, or other such subsequent action.

Absences

Parents are requested to call the school to explain absences on the first day of an absence. School administrative staff that take the call email this information to class staff.

If parents fail to inform the school of a child's absence, the teacher for the child's class will ring home by day two of the absence to ascertain the reason for the absence. If the child is subject to a child protection plan, or has been flagged by the Head Teacher or School Attendance officer as a persistent absentee, this call will be made on the first day of the absence. If s/he cannot get through to the family after two calls separated by an hour and accompanied by voicemail messages, s/he must contact the relatives cited as next of kin on school application and information forms in the child's file.

When the child has returned to school but has not brought a note from his/her parents to explain the absence, the school will contact parents by email at first, requesting that they provide the school with a reason for the absence.

If there is no reply to the school's first stage email from parents then a second email will be sent.

If parents do not respond to the emails, the School's Attendance officer will call the parents to verbally request an email or note with a reason for the child's absence.

The school is required to take legal action against the parents of any child whose attendance is poor such as penalty notices, parenting orders, parenting contracts or even prosecution.

If a pupil's attendance drops to **95%** at any time, parents will be informed in writing and requested to avoid any further drop and warned about the consequences.

If the attendance rate continues to drop and reaches **93%**, parents will be requested to meet immediately with the Head Teacher to discuss the problem.

The school is required to take legal action against the parents of any child whose attendance is poor such as penalty notices, parenting orders, parenting contracts or even prosecution.

The following categories of absences require the school to contact the local Education Welfare Services Department.

- Pupils who have been absent without authorisation for ten days or more;
- Pupils who are about to be deleted from the admission register due to withdrawal for any reason, including Year Six leavers, (the LA must be formally notified in writing and the admissions register updated before the pupil leaves the school);
- Pupils who have been withdrawn by parents because they no longer live locally;
- Pupils suffering serious long-term illness;
- Pupils in custody;

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded.

Parental Role

It is essential that, as far as possible, pupils maintain full attendance throughout their programme of study.

It is also important that parents discuss any problems regarding attendance with their pupil's class teacher or the Head Teacher, who will be able to offer advice and guidance, insha'Allah.

Parents must report any forthcoming absences due to appointments in advance in a letter to the school office.

Parents must report any sudden illnesses by ringing or emailing the school office in the morning of the absence and giving in a letter or emailing the school explaining the full length of absence, when their child returns to school.

Parents must apply for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances in writing to the Head Teacher and wait for a reply before making bookings and arrangements

School attendance is also important because the law requires it. Parents are legally responsible for making sure their child/ren get a full time education. For most people this means registering the child at school and making sure they attend. Failing to ensure children's regular attendance at school is a legal offence.

Acceptable reasons for pupil absence

Illness

Parents are expected to provide medical evidence for an absence of five days or more.

Medical appointments

Parents are expected to arrange appointments as much as possible during school holidays, at weekends or after school hours. There will be times when this isn't possible but parents are requested to try to give as much advance warning as possible and take the appointment letter or card into school.

Religious festivals

The school is closed during all Muslim holidays and national and Christian ones. Pupils from other religions will be given no more than 3 days leave for each religious festival requiring absence.

Holidays

Redbridge Local Authority state that leave of absence during term time should not be granted unless in the most exceptional of circumstances. Governmental legislation informs this view. The parents of pupils of Read Academy are strongly discouraged from taking their children on holiday during term time.

If a holiday during term-time appears unavoidable, parents must ask the Head Teacher's permission in writing as far in advance as possible.

The Head Teacher can only authorise two weeks in any one year and strictly only on the basis of genuine difficulty.

If a child is absent for a period of time longer than this, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and section 3 will be applied.

If a child fails to return after two weeks and the school is unable to trace him/her at the address on school records then that child will be removed from the school roll and the Local Authority will be informed in accordance with the school's Admissions Withdrawal policy.

Child missing from education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members must carefully follow the school's procedures, as outlined here and in the pupil attendance policy, for dealing with children that are absent for long periods, or are absent without explanation, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

The law requires the school to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils will be placed on both registers. The school will place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupils will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.

The admission register will be kept accurately and up to date. The school will regularly encourage parents to inform it of any changes whenever they occur to help the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

The school will monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular.

Where a parent notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record in the admission register:

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools will record in the admission register.

The Pupil Attendance Officer will also inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days, as close as conveniently possible to the 10th day of absence. The contact is:

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For Children Missing
Education London Borough
of Redbridge
Tel: 020 8708 6047
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