



# Attendance Policy

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## **Article 28**

You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

## **Introduction**

Read Academy is committed to improving school attendance so children can maximise their educational and social achievements, enabling them to develop self-discipline and organisational skills to prepare them for the work environment.

We recognise that attending school regularly can be a protective factor for children, contributing to keeping them safe from harm and reducing their engagement in risky behaviours, anti-social behaviour and juvenile crime. Here, at Read Academy, we offer a safe environment, positive relationships, high quality teaching and learning and opportunities to develop social and emotional skills.

As a school we raise awareness of school attendance issues with key professional groups such as Education Welfare, Health, Housing and Police. This is to ensure that school attendance is a priority and that families are challenged with consistent messages from all.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that children attend school rests with parents/carers. However, we promote attendance and tackle absence by involving parents from the moment their children start our school and encourage the children with targets and rewards.

### **1. Parents and Carers**

Parents are responsible by law in ensuring their children receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special needs they may have. Once enrolled at school, parents must ensure that:

- Their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and ready to learn.
- They notify the school on the first and subsequent days, before 8.30am, if their child is absent. They should provide an explanation for the absence.
- Where possible they do not arrange medical appointments during school hours. If unavoidable, evidence must be produced to the School Office.
- They understand that NO leave of absence during a school term will be authorised except in exceptional circumstances, in line with government recommendations.
- They instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- They are aware of the School's Attendance Policy.
- They work in partnership with the school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.

### **2. The Local Authority**

The Education Welfare Service fulfils the **statutory duty** of the Local Authority in enforcing regular school attendance.

In doing so it enables schools and parents to meet their respective responsibilities. The school has their own link Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who will work in close partnership with the school.

The EWS would provide an officer who will undertake casework with pupils and their parents to support a return to regular attendance and punctuality or will follow through with enforcement if deemed appropriate.

This can include home visits to assess the situation, arrange meetings with the school, parents and pupils, enable families to access appropriate support from other services and agencies. Any additional duties we require from the EWO is on a Pay As You Go basis.

The Education Welfare Service has the delegated power, in consultation with SCC Legal Services, to take the legal proceedings against families who fail in their duty to ensure regular school attendance.

### **3. The School**

We are responsible for supporting the attendance of pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to absence.

We differentiate in the registers between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised.

Our range of strategies to identify pupils who may be at risk of becoming a permanent absentee includes:

- Working actively with individual pupils, vulnerable groups and the school as a whole, to maximise attendance rates.
- Being sensitive to the needs of individual parents and pupils which reflect the way attendance issues are addressed. This includes some parents who have difficulty in understanding written communications and some being reluctant to come into school.
- Offering additional support to those in the vulnerable group or those with SEN who are at higher risk of poor attendance.
- Maintaining a list of pupils with a pattern of persistent absence (PA) which the Government defines as less than 90%) and those children at risk of becoming PA.

### **4. Guidance on Term Time Leave of Absence**

- Term time leave of absence for family holidays and any other extended leave of absence, is not acceptable and will not be authorised unless deemed as exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher.
- Parents will be informed from the start of the academic year and reminded at every opportunity throughout their time at school, eg newsletters, school app and letters.
- Parents will be issued notification declining the request of term time leave of absence. Parents are invited to make representations if circumstances are exceptional eg in relation to a one-off event when the school holidays cannot be utilised, the request has been kept to a minimum number of sessions and evidence has been provided. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Senior Development Governors whether or not to grant the request after giving due considerations to the circumstances.

### **5. Failure to attend school when leave of absence has been declined**

Parents are informed at the time of the request being declined that:

- They risk receiving a Penalty Notice for Non-attendance at School. This is raised by the LA and carries a fine of £60 per child per parent (if paid within 21 days).
- A Penalty Notice for Non-attendance at school is also applied by Read Academy which is £30 fine per day for every day the child is absent.
- Unauthorised persistent absence year on year, will be taken into account and may place them at risk of enforcement action through the courts.

## 6. Punctuality

We monitor lateness on a daily basis and follow up persistent offenders.

At the time of writing, the school states that:

- Registration is at 8.00am until 8:05am for Primary and Secondary and until 8:15m for EYFS.
- Pupils arriving after the registers have closed at 8:05am for Primary and Secondary and at 8:15am for EYFS will receive an 'Unauthorised Late' (U) mark. The child is also signed in the 'Pupil Signing In/Out' book for purposes of emergency evacuation.
- A late penalty fine of £10 is applied to pupils that are late over three times in any half term.
- All 'Unauthorised Late' marks affect the pupil's overall percentage attendance.

When pupils arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. When one pupil arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and teacher – everyone's education is compromised.

Lateness will result in your child not being allowed to enter the lesson they have arrived late to and will have to wait until the next lesson begins.

**A lateness fine will be imposed of £10 payable after the third late and each time thereafter for each academic year.**

## 7. Collection after school

When a child is collected late from school, the adult collecting the child is required to complete the late book giving reasons for the delay. Unless notification of a late

pick-up has been received by the office all emergency contacts are phoned if parent/guardian is unavailable. When a child's welfare is affected by inadequate end of day arrangements the situation will be reviewed regularly and a decision to call Social Services will be made.

## 8. Removal from School Roll

The reasons for children to be removed from the School Roll are:

- For a permanent exclusion on the day of confirmation.
- If a parent makes it clear, in writing, that they take responsibility to home educate their child. The 'Children Missing Education' Officer and, if applicable, their Social Worker, will be informed.
- If they take an unauthorised sabbatical with no return date stated.

## 9. Absence due to sickness

Pupils will undoubtedly get their usual coughs and colds. If they need to remain at home because of this, please contact the school in the morning of the absence so we can keep the register updated with the reason for absence.

Absences longer than three days will require further evidence. Please call the school office daily to provide any necessary update on your child's absence from school.

**If a child has had vomiting or diarrhoea, they must remain at home for 48 hours following the final bout of either illness.**

## **10. Leaving Read Academy**

We are always sad to say goodbye to our pupils. If your child is leaving Read Academy because you are relocating or they are changing schools, please inform us. We need your new address and the details of the new school, including school name, address and start date. This safeguarding procedure means that we know that your child is still in education, safe and well. If you decide to Home-school your child, it is essential that you inform school in writing. This can be via an email to the school office.

## **Monitoring and review**

The Headship team will review this policy every two years or sooner if necessary.