



Redlands Primary & Nursery School

Redlands Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Members of staff responsible: Mrs L Hollinger

Date policy written: May 2016

Date approved by the full governing body: November 2018

Date to be reviewed: November 2020



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction:

School attendance is a priority at Redlands because we recognise its importance in safeguarding our pupils and allowing them to reach their full potential. One of the most effective ways that schools can improve achievement is by improving attendance. Even the very best teachers struggle to raise the standards of children who are not in school regularly. Similarly, when children are late for school they miss out on important basic skills sessions at the start of the school day. Therefore, we are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure that all of our children achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and good punctuality.

As part of the Worksop family of schools, we have adopted the family strategy in dealing with attendance. This ensures that all feeder primary schools will follow the same procedures and there will be a uniform approach for all of our pupils, most of whom will eventually attend one of the Outwood Grange academies.

At Redlands our overall attendance target is 96%

Attendance and the Law:

- Failure by parents/carers to ensure regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence, punishable by law (Education Act 1996 Section 444)
- Fixed penalties (fines) may be issued by the local authority if the threshold of unauthorised absence is met

Expectations of the school:

- Create a friendly and welcoming atmosphere where children feel safe and enjoy coming to school
- Record attendance and punctuality accurately during morning and afternoon registration
- Encourage and promote good attendance through a range of rewards and incentives
- Monitor attendance and follow up absences promptly
- Communicate regularly with parents and carers
- Take prompt action where problems are identified
- Support families in improving attendance where necessary by identifying barriers and working to overcome these
- Liaise with external agencies and make referrals if necessary
- Ensure all staff deal consistently with absence and punctuality
- Follow the agreed attendance procedures



Expectations of Parents and Carers:

- Support the school in aiming for excellent attendance levels
- Ensure the child arrives at school on time every day
- Avoid keeping pupils at home for minor illnesses eg coughs and colds
- Contact the school on the first day of a child's absence and daily if the absence lasts longer than one day
- Arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school time wherever possible. When appointments must be made during school hours, please notify the school in advance and provide evidence of appointments when asked to do so.
- Only request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies to improve the child's attendance if necessary

Rewards and Incentives:

- Each week, the class with the highest attendance (and no lates) from KS2 and from KS1/FS is announced in assembly and they are awarded the attendance bears
- Bronze, silver and gold award cards are given for 100% attendance each term
- All pupils with 100% attendance for the full academic year are invited to an end of year reward trip

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences:

Absences approved by the school will be recorded as **authorised** absences (eg illness, medical appointment, bereavement). Any absences which are not approved by the school will be recorded as **unauthorised** absences (eg oversleeping, birthdays, days out, holidays). If the number of unauthorised absences reaches the threshold set by the local authority (currently 5 days unauthorised absence over a 6 week period or 3 days over a 6 week period if the absence is due to a holiday in term time) then a penalty notice may be issued.

Requesting a leave of absence:

To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence form clearly explaining the reasons. Holidays will not usually be granted in term time. If parents feel that there are exceptional circumstances for the holiday then they must provide a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors explaining their reasons. The decision as to whether or not the holiday will be authorised by the school is made by the Chair of Governors.

Monitoring:

The Attendance Lead will work closely with the Attendance Officer to monitor attendance and report to governors termly.



Attendance Procedures

Reporting to Teachers

At the start of every academic year, teachers receive an attendance report of the previous year for each pupil in their class. During the year they receive half termly updates. Children with less than 95% attendance are clearly highlighted so that these children can be monitored closely and informal discussions can take place with parents.

Reporting to Parents

- At the start of each academic year, the Worksop Family of Schools attendance leaflet is sent to all parents.
- In the Autumn Term, teachers give out the Redlands attendance leaflet at parent consultation evening and comment on pupil attendance and punctuality. Copies are also sent home to parents who do not attend.
- In the Spring Term, teachers give out the attendance traffic light letter and comment on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- In the Summer Term, an attendance report is enclosed with each pupil report. Teachers may also comment on punctuality and attendance in the report.

Additional communication regarding pupil absence will take place as follows:

All Pupil Absences

1. First Day Call – On the first day of absence of any child, if there has been no contact from parents/carers, the Attendance Officer will contact home and ascertain:
 - The cause of the absence
 - The likely duration of the absence
 - If the absence will be authorised
2. Home Visits - If, after numerous attempts, the parents /carers cannot be contacted, the absence will be referred to the Head Teacher and a home visit will be made by the Attendance Officer and another member of staff the following day.



Persistent Absentees

1. Attendance is monitored weekly and if a child's attendance drops below 92% we will send Letter 1 raising an initial concern about attendance.
2. If attendance does not improve Letter 2 will be sent to request medical evidence for further absences.
3. If attendance still does not improve, and there is no medical evidence, Letter 3 will be sent to invite parents/carers to attend a meeting with the attendance team.
4. If there is still no improvement and no medical evidence after meetings and support from the attendance team, then we will make a referral to the Early Help Unit.

Leave of Absence Requests

Step 1

- Parent/carer completes leave of absence form (**Letter 1**) and if they think the request is exceptional they must attach any evidence.

Step 2

- If the request is declined **Letter 2a** is sent to inform parents of the decision and advise that a penalty notice may be issued if children are absent on the dates requested
- If the request is authorised **Letter 2b** is sent to inform parents of the decision.

Step 3

- If parents take children out of school for an unauthorised holiday **Letter 3** will be sent to advise that a request to issue a penalty notice has been made.

Step 4

- A letter is sent to request a penalty notice to be issued from the local authority.