

Policy on Attendance & Registration

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Author: DRS

Key Personnel: Mr D R Smith	Headmaster	head@ruckleigh.co.uk
Mrs R Chandler	A/H Pastoral	rachelchandler@ruckleigh.co.uk

Policy Statement

- 1.1 For pupils to benefit fully from the educational opportunities available at Ruckleigh School [the School hereafter], they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Ineffective registration or poorly executed follow up procedures can increase the risk of truancy and educational underperformance. Which can negatively affect pupils' wellbeing. A child missing school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or may indicate that a pupil is at risk of significant harm. Consequently, registration and attendance practice and procedures are extremely important and must be regarded as such by pupils, parents and staff. Improving attendance is everyone's business; and high pupil attendance will require a safe and supportive school environment working together with parents and other local partners to treat the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools '*Child Missing in Education Policy*', which specifically outlines emergency procedures to follow if a child is identified as missing on a given school day or activity.

Aims

2.1 This policy aims to provide a clear, consistent and cohesive framework which conforms with the statutory requirements and promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of pupils at the school, as well as outlining clear procedures for identifying and addressing situations where pupils fail to attend regularly or punctually, or go missing, so that:

- Procedures and lines of responsibility in the school are clear as regards:
 - i. Attendance & Registration
 - ii. Authorisation & Clearance of Absence
 - iii. How sanctions may be used to support expectations of attendance and punctuality
 - iv. How and when to report concerns
- Staff, parents and pupils are aware of, understand, and can readily comply with statutory regulations and school rules governing attendance.
- Absences and instances of lateness are identified and recorded systematically and accurately and follows up quickly and appropriately in ways that promote high levels of attendance and punctuality and enable action to be taken quickly to identify and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Effective steps are taken, working together with local partners as appropriate, when any pupil becomes persistently or severely absent from education or missing in education.
- The school fulfils its responsibility to notify the local education authority when a pupil registers or de-registers at non-standard transition times or otherwise becomes missing in education.

Statutory Framework

3.1 The legal framework governing school attendance is laid out in '*Working together to improve attendance*'[1] . The school also complies with guidance published by the Independent Schools Inspectorate[2], responsibilities of parents towards their child's attendance are laid out in 'School attendance responsibilities'[3]. In addition, 'Children Missing in Education'[4] provides further statutory guidance.

Responsibilities of Parents

4.1 Parents with a child of school age have a legal duty to make sure that their child receives an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and to any special educational need they have. This means they must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend for example.

4.2 Parents are responsible for informing the school on any occasion/day when their child is unable to attend due to illness, interview, medical/dental appointment or religious observance[5] providing the reason for non-attendance. This should be done through the following means:

- i. Where an absence is expected [i.e. interview, medical/dental appointment] leave of absence should be requested in advance via the Parent Portal.
<https://parents.ruckleigh.co.uk>

- ii. Where an absence is unexpected [i.e. illness] Parents should telephone the main school office before 8.30am either speaking to a member of office staff or leaving a clear message on the school answering. Or email the school office at office@ruckleigh.co.uk

4.3 Parents should only seek leave of absence in exceptional cases. Please note **the school cannot authorise leave of absence for holidays.**

4.4 Where a child has missed five consecutive days due to illness, or where there is a recurrent pattern of absence due to ill health, parents must produce a doctor's note to support the reason for the child's absence. As far as possible parents should book medical/dental appointments should be made outside of school day/term time.

4.5 When parents/guardians are to be away overnight during term they should contact the school to inform us of the name and contact details of any temporary guardian.

4.6 Parents are expected to work together with the school to help overcome and understand any barriers to a child's attendance and proactively engage with any support offered by the school or local authority to avoid the need for more formal support. The DfE considers an absence level of 10% or more to represent persistent absence.

4.7 Where parents fail to ensure regular attendance, and have not engaged with support services or voluntary measures the local authority may choose to act in line *School attendance 'Parental Responsibility Measures, 2015[6]'*

Responsibilities of Pupils

5.1 Pupils have the responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well and to arrive at school in time for registration each day during term time.

5.2 Failure to attend school regularly or punctually arrive at registration on time may constitute a breach of the schools *'Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy.'*

The School's Responsibilities

6.1 The school holds several responsibilities regarding pupil attendance. It must:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes to follow up on absences
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.

- Share information with other partners in the area, such as local authorities, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, or when a child is deemed to be missing in education.

6.2 The Designated Senior Leader for attendance is the Headmaster, D. R. Smith head@ruckleigh.co.uk, who is supported by the Assistant Head Pastoral, R. Chandler, Form Teachers and the school administrative staff.

6.3 The school uses data to support high attendance. The school recognises that worrying attendance trends require swift identification and intervention to prevent them becoming habitual. An effective strategy for reviewing attendance data is therefore essential as part of its strategies the school will:

- Monitor and analyse data on a weekly basis
- Analyse trends of half termly, termly and annual data
- Devise appropriate strategies in response to this data at individual and cohort level, as appropriate.

6.4 The school will seek to address severe and persistent absence in line with ‘*Working Together to Improve School Attendance*’ 2024[7]. The school’s strategy when doing so is founded on the understanding that the child’s welfare is paramount, and that respectful and positive relations between school and home lie at the foundation of good attendance; and that the school will be seeking to understand and remove barriers to attendance, together with parents. Wider support from the local authority will be sought where lower-level supports are not proving effective. The school notes that:

- Where pupil miss more than 10% of school over a sustained period, the DfE advises, that we work with local authorities to put in additional targeted support.
- Particular focus must be given to pupils missing 50% or more of school.
- The school will always contact the relevant local authority children’s services where a child is absent for ten days or more, whenever a child’s level of unauthorised absence exceeds 10% or whenever any absence appears to the school to constitute a safeguarding concern.

In seeking to address concerning absence the school will:

- Make informal contact seeking to understand in school barriers; seek to support pupils and parents in overcoming these barriers. These may include welfare and mental health support, mentoring, creating and emphasising positive reasons to attend; plans for successfully making it to school; voluntary engagement with local authority services.
- Require the presentation of formal medical notes when a child is absent for 5 consecutive days of illness, or where a pattern of absence linked to illness emerges.
- Where absence continues/intensifies so will support. This may include:

-more formal meetings with parents

-voluntary early help assessments

Where voluntary support has not been effective more formal support may be put in place:

- Parenting Contract
- Education Supervision Order
- LEA issue of a fixed penalty notice
- A referral to children's social care

The school will record and evaluate the success of each stage of intervention. The school will be particularly mindful and sensitive when supporting pupils whose attendance is impaired by long term medical conditions (physical or mental health) disabilities or special educational needs.

Admission and Attendance Registers

6.5 The School must hold an accurate Admission Register (or School Roll) and attendance register. All pupils must be placed on the Admission Register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register.

Registration Codes for use in the Attendance Register

6.6 Table of Authorised Codes

Code	Legend
^	Present (am) and Present (pm)
L	Late
K	Attending education provision arranged by the LEA [drop down should be used to provide context]
V	Educational visit or Trip
P	Attending a Sporting Activity
W	Attending Work Experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity [this could include taster days]
D	The pupil is attending another school where they are on roll [i.e.. Dual registration]
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
M	Leave of absence on a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence granted to attend an interview
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory attendance for pupil not of school age



C2	Pupil of school age but working to part time timetable
C	Leave of absence granted for exceptional circumstances
T	Parent travelling for occupational reasons
R	Religious Observance
I	Illness
E	Suspended or Excluded without alternative provision made
Q	Unable to attend school due to a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend school due to transport difficulties [i.e. bus not available]
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption [i.e. suspension of trains, trams etc]
Y3	Unable to attend school due to part of school premise closure
Y4	Unable to attend due to whole site closure
Y5	Unable to attend due to pupil in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend due to public health guidance
Y7	Unable to attend due to any other unavoidable cause

6.7 Table of Unauthorised Codes

Code	Legend
G	Holiday
N	Absent reason unknown for first five consecutive days
O	Absent for reasons unknown after five consecutive days
U	Arrived in school after registering closed

6.8 Administrative Codes

Code	Legend
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register

#	Planned closure
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Children Missing from Education

7.1 In accordance with the law the school has an attendance register and an admission register, and all pupils are placed on both registers.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside of the education system i.e. Home Educated
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school.
- have been certified by a registered professional as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- are in custody for a period of four months or more and the Head does not reasonably believe they'll be returning to school.
- Have been permanently excluded

The local authority will be notified when a child is deleted from the schools Admission Register under the above circumstances so that the local authority can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory education who are missing in education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect. In any case where a pupil is deleted from the register when the next school is not known, the school is required to report the circumstances, as soon as possible, after the grounds for deletion are met, to the LEA in which the pupil lives.

Children who fail to attend regularly

8.1 The school will inform the relevant LEA and or Child Social Care Services (CSC) as appropriate immediately if a single absence raises child protection concerns (see above), or a pupil has five days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence, or where the context is understood and there are no safety concerns regarding a child); or in any situation where it is deemed necessary to escalate concern regarding poor attendance on the basis of rising concerns about a child's welfare, in the judgement of senior pastoral staff.

Day to Day Attendance Processes

10.1 These are laid out in both Handbooks on the school website.

[1] Working together to improve school attendance' 2024

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf



[2] ISI <https://www.isi.net>

[3] 'School attendance responsibilities', 2025

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581539/School_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures_statutory_guidance.pdf

[4] 'Children Missing in Education' 2015

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f5e4a40f0b6230268f135/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

[5] Leave of absence will always be granted for genuine religious observance

[6]

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581539/School_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures_statutory_guidance.pdf

[7]

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf