



Rushton CE (VC) Primary School

Happy Learning Together

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Principles

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

The attendance and behaviour policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. These include:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the

Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Illness

If a child is ill the school should be notified that morning by telephone between 8.30 and 8.45am. A message may be left if the phone is unanswered. The school must be notified each day a child is off (this can be done in advance if there is a required period of absence – such as a communicable disease.)

The school will contact a family if they have not received a reason for absence by 10.00am on the first day of absence.

Holiday

Authorised absences will only be endorsed by the headteacher in exceptional circumstances. This is in line with DFE regulations.

Should a child incur more than ten days of unauthorised absence, the school will contact the LA to discuss the possibility of issuing a penalty notice.

Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the EWO will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

The school's annual attendance target is 94%

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are Mr Sutton and Mrs Bullock.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Insert date when policy adopted and date for review

	Author R Sutton	Date of amendment
Version Autumn 2015		



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Dear

Further to our meeting on *date*.

I am able to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's extended leave of absence from *date* to *date*.

Requests for extended holiday leave are only ever granted in exceptional circumstances. *Outline reason for authorisation*.

Please contact me to discuss a possible study pack or project outline that *child's name* can complete whilst away.

I look forward to *name of pupil* returning on *date* and hope that *name of pupil* finds it an interesting and stimulating experience.

I must remind you that if *name of pupil* does not return to school within ten school days of the agreed date, without reasonable cause, *name of pupil* may be removed from the school roll.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher



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Dear

Thank you for your recent holiday request form.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence from *date* to *date*, for the purpose of a family holiday.

I have no wish to deprive families of a well earned family holiday but my first concern has to be the educational development of *pupil name*. Requests for holiday leave are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered *name of pupil* overall level of attendance, academic attainment and the impact any leave may have on public examinations and tests (please see attached form).

If you decide to go ahead with your proposed holiday, *pupil name* absences will be marked as unauthorised. I should inform you that unauthorised absences are referred to the Local Authority who may under certain circumstance consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please feel free to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher