



## Attendance Policy

### Introduction

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary education.

The government expects:

- Schools and local authorities to:
  - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
  - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
  - act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

Attendance truly matters. Children and young people are more likely to progress and succeed if they show high attendance. If children miss school it is hard for the school build their knowledge and skills. At school they learn to work with others and take responsibility for themselves, these are essential skills for later life.

### 2 Roles and Responsibilities

Section 7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on **parents** to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

**Parents** whose children are registered at school are then responsible for ensuring that they attend punctually, regularly and stay at school.

**Schools** must maintain an **Admissions Register** and must have an **Attendance Register**.

The Registration (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 require a school to put the child's name on the Admissions Register on the first day that the child is expected to attend school. If the pupil does not attend, they will be recorded as absent – this can be authorised or unauthorised.

The **school** will authorise an absence if:

- the child is too ill to attend and the school accepts this as valid (although if the child is off for long periods the school might ask for proof from the doctor);
- the parent has got the advance permission of the school e.g. for a holiday, religious observation;
- the child has a medical or dental appointment;
- the child is on study leave;
- the child is being educated off-site;
- the child has been excluded.
- As part of a transition programme

**Schools** have to regularly inform the Local Authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. Ravenswood inform the SEN team.

**Schools** also have a safeguarding duty, under **section 175 Education Act 2002**, to investigate any unexplained absences.

### 3 Procedures

#### A. Maintain school attendance register via SIMs.

We will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of the registration procedures.



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- Ensure that staff complete, accurate registration processes at the beginning of each morning by 9.10am and afternoon session by 1.50pm.
- Admin team check registers have been completed and check for any unexplained absences.

### B. First day Contact

We encourage parents/carers to contact the school office early on the first day of absence (by 8.50 am)

- If the parent has not contacted the School by 9.30 am, they will be contacted by the School Admin Team or Health Care Assistant to check reason for absence.
- Parents will be challenged if they fail to inform the school of the reasons for absence, or if the reasons given for absence are unacceptable.

It is the view of the school that early first day contact will benefit pupils, parents/carers and the school by:

- Checking no pupils are missing and may be at risk.
- If no contact is achieved with the parent/carer by 11am the school will make a risk assessment and report any concerns to the local authority and consider phoning 101 and asking the police to do a well-being check.
- Raising awareness of the importance of full attendance.
- Assisting parents and pupils to develop habits that reduce casual absence and encouraging early contact from parents.
- Addressing problems before they become serious.
- Improving home-school liaison.
- Arranging staff delegation for the day.

These procedures will be applied to every absence and give a clear message that absences are not allowed for reasons other than those determined by the law.

The procedure and the need for it should be understood by all, and the school will do this by regularly writing to parents.

### C. Lateness without due cause.

Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration.

There are three negative results caused by pupils who constantly arrive late:

- The loss of learning suffered by the pupils themselves which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school.
- The disruption to other children in their class as the teacher's attention is taken from the task at hand.
- Can raise levels of unauthorised absence

The school will arrange a meeting with parents/carers to discuss plans to improve punctual arrival for morning registration.

Children arriving after 9.30am and up until 11.10am will be recorded as late (L) and unacceptable (U) between 11.10am and 13.40pm

### D. Authorisation of Absence

In Ravenswood School the decision as to whether an absence will be authorised will be taken by the Head Teacher. School staff will consult with the Head when there are any causes for concern. This may be after a period of absence, a pattern of missed absences or continued lateness.

**Authorised Absence:** an absence agreed by the Headteacher with an explanation from parents

**Unauthorised Absence:** an absence not agreed or unexplained



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**Medical:** an appointment such as hospital, doctor or dentist

**Illness:** illness as informed by the parent or on receipt of doctor's/hospital notes if required.

Full guidance on attendance codes is in Staff Key Information Folders.

### E. Holidays in term time

Parents/carers need to be aware that taking their child out on holiday in term time will have a detrimental impact on their learning. Some children take a week to settle back into school following a week's holiday in term-time and hence two weeks of learning are lost.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2023 say that leave of absence from a state-funded school may only be given by the Headteacher or another authorised person if:

- **a parent / carer who the pupil normally lives with has asked for the leave in advance**, and
- the authorised person thinks that leave should be given because of the exceptional circumstances of the request (for example: where parents/carers are forced personnel on leave from a foreign posting; where employers' restrict their employee's holiday leave to certain times supported by a letter from the employer; significant family events or circumstances e.g. marriage or funeral of family member).
- when a pupil is to be employed (whether paid or unpaid) to take part in certain kinds of performance during school hours, leave of absence may be given
- there are also specific provisions for leave of absence for a job interview or admission interview or to study for a public examination

In recognition that some of our children have highly complex special needs, Ravenswood School will authorise holidays in term times for the following reasons.

- The small minority of pupils whose needs are so complex they are highly vulnerable and need to access holiday accommodation in quiet times. The criteria used to authorise holiday for such pupils are top-up funding levels A3, A4, B3, B4, C3, C4, D3, D4 and E3, E4.
- When a pupil is selected by a charity for inclusion on an educational visit / holiday. Particularly when they are travelling without family members as this promotes the development of independence.

Each request is considered on an individual basis and takes into account the current attendance rate of the pupil. If this is below 85% a holiday in term-time will not generally be authorised. The Head Teacher does not have to give permission if parents request a holiday. If the holiday is not approved, a child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

The following will not meet the criteria:

- Where the child's attendance is below 85% in the past 6 months
- If it means a child will be out of school on holiday for more than 2 weeks in any academic year.
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family Day Trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays.

To **request holidays** in term-time **parents/carers** must complete and return a Pupil Absence Request for Exceptional Circumstances form and hand it to the School Office.



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When a holiday in term-time is authorised parents / carers are expected to support their child's learning through either: -

- Completion of work missed (particularly for pupils on exam courses)
- Or
- Completion of a holiday diary / scrap book of the activities done during the holiday to return to school and share their learning with the class.

### F. Supporting children with long term or frequent short term absences

If a child is absent for long periods of time due to medical reasons there may be a need to consider consultation with the relevant medical professional; (e.g. absence from school based on the national average). This would be a supportive measure and only achieved with parental consent.

If there are problems at school which affect a pupil's attendance we will identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

## 5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance data is monitored and analysed three times a year. We benchmark attendance of pupils against national data. Where patterns of low attendance for any cohort are identified we review and plan interventions to secure improved attendance.

### History of document

Issue No.	Author/Owner	Date Reviewed	Approved by Governors on	Comments
1.	School	Summer 2018		Revised due to local authority no longer having statutory duty to provide EWS.
2.	School	Sept 2018	03/10/18	
3.	School	Sept 2020	02/09/2020	Added Appendix re: Covid-19
4	School	March 2024	13/03/24	Added Appendix re: Covid-19 Amended section E
5.	School	May 2026		Removal of Covid 19 appendix



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