



RAVENSCROFT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy and Procedures
(April 2024)

Philosophy

At Ravenscroft Community Primary School, we are committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. On the basis of equal opportunities, we will take measures to encourage regular and punctual attendance at school. Attendance at school is essential if children are to fully participate in the learning opportunities offered. Regular absence from school breaks the continuity of a child's learning and consequently his/her progress is significantly limited. Consistent attendance is an essential foundation in order to achieve potential.

Similarly, persistent lateness is disruptive to the individual child, the teacher and the rest of the class leading to loss of valuable teaching time. If allowed to go unchecked this could set a pattern for future behaviour and encourage disaffection.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance and punctuality are critical factors to a productive and successful school career. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure that all pupils adhere to maximum possible attendance. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Wellbeing

Ravenscroft Community Primary School is committed to creating a learning environment in which the needs of children are central and emotional wellbeing is at the heart of productive learning. We believe that behaviour is communication and a restorative approach in school helps to develop a healthier learning environment in which adults and children take responsibility over their own behaviour and learning. The minds of those in a restorative school are focused on strengthening and repairing relationships, are inquisitive about what needs to happen and avoid attributing blame. We value respect for self, respect for others and respect for the world around us and seek to work in partnership with children and parents/carers to support them to become emotionally regulated and successful learners. Ultimately, we seek to build positive and honest relationships with each other to support all.

Aims

We aim to take action to reinforce good attendance and to address non-attendance in a consistent and transparent manner.

To achieve levels of attendance we must ensure that: -

- We create a warm, welcoming atmosphere in which children are valued and encouraged to attend regularly and arrive on time.
- Pupils' reports include information on the pupils' attendance showing any unauthorised absence.
- The curriculum is appropriate to the needs and interests of all pupils.
- The pupils are motivated to attend regularly through positive encouragement and rewards.
- The pupils are encouraged to arrive punctually.
- Structure and practice are established to support a whole school approach to raising attendance levels and dealing with non-attendance.

The school cannot work in isolation. The partnership of school, parents and the Local Authority is fundamental, with all involved accepting responsibility and working together to improve attendance for the benefit of the pupils and the community. Prompt action on non-attendance and accurate and consistent registration are important areas of child protection.

Expectations

We appreciate the vital importance of regular attendance at school.

We expect the following from all pupils:

- That they will attend school regularly.

- That they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem that may hinder them from attending school.
- Attendance is a crucial factor to a productive school career and so we will promote 100% attendance for each pupil. (see appendix 1)
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We expect the following from parents:

- To encourage their children to attend school.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as possible whenever their child is unable to attend, explaining the reason for absence.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To ensure that school have their up-to-date contact details (contact number and address).
- If attending the Designated Special Provision (DSP), and transport has been provided by the Local Authority, have their child ready in the morning for collection by taxi/minibus.
- Encourage children to arrive at school punctually and take appropriate action when this is not achieved.
- Inform the school in advance, when a child has a medical/dental appointment but try to arrange it out of school hours. This will be deemed as 'authorised' absence.
- Contact the school without delay if there is a particular problem, either in or out of school, which is or may affect regular attendance.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Initiatives to encourage good attendance on a weekly and termly basis. (See appendix 1)
- The provision of a quality education through a relevant and stimulating age-appropriate curriculum.
- Weekly register checks will note any patterns of lateness or absences and the school will contact parents by telephone or letter to engage their support in rectifying the problem.
- Offer targeted help, from the Pastoral Lead, Miss Clarke to children/families as and when appropriate. Early identification of needs and support required can prevent concerns escalating. Early help plans should have focused outcomes for children and families and should be actively planned with them. Plans should deliver evidence-based interventions, and clear threshold for specific agency intervention e.g. social care, housing, mental health services. We see how early help can transform a child in school, not just what they are able to achieve academically, but how their personal, social and emotional development can thrive with the right support. We are committed to early help because it is the right thing to do for our children to give them the best start in life.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is from 8.40am when the gate opens. The gate closes at 8.50am. If your child arrives later than this, they will enter the school through the main office and will be asked to sign in on the electronic sign-in.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day for the infants are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day. In the juniors work is started as soon as the children arrive.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance. Registers close at 9.15am each school day.
- We will let you know by letter or phone call if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- If you are unexpectedly delayed at the end of the school day, please ring school to let us know.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be taken to the main reception area where we will endeavour to contact parent/guardian. In the unlikely event that we are

unable to contact anyone we would have no option but to inform social services and the police.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Parents are unwell or unforeseen family circumstances (*call us, we can help to get your child to school*)
- Late after registration closed (9.15am)
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday.
- Unapproved Holidays

Leave of Absence

The school support the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays.

There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the Head Teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governing Body who is supporting Knowsley Council's Guidance.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils. The Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006 make provision for holidays in term time only with the permission of the Headteacher. The regulations state that holidays in term time should only be authorised under special circumstances & that under exceptional circumstances, no more than 5 school days should be authorised for a holiday. It will be at the head teacher's discretion to authorise a holiday.

It is our policy:

- From September 2013 Head Teachers can no longer grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. (Please see Leave of Absence Policy)
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking. Please ask the school office for a form; the head teacher will consider your request and advise you of her decision.
- If the school does not agree and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.

School outings / visits / residential trips.

Opportunities for children to attend these activities are provided. If they do not go, the children, **are expected in school**, where alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Governors **will not authorise** absence if the child does not attend school during this time, unless there is a valid medical reason (*a bad cold is not acceptable*) or medical certificate provided or there are exceptional family circumstances.

Data Analysis

School collects and stores attendance data using the management information systems. (SIMs). The school provides attendance data to the DFE, using SIMs to send data about the school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics. The school uses the attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils. Where attendance is a concern, the school will use data to analyse attendance by year group, classes, groups of pupils for example ethnicity or gender. The school uses attendance data to identify the main causes of absences within the school and to take action to address and improve those areas. The school will use data to monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

Dual Register

Some children attend our school for additional specialist support from other schools. These children are on roll at their main school but are placed on our registers for accountability and health and safety reasons. The registers will only display the days/sessions that they are due to attend Ravenscroft Community Primary School.

Educational Penalty Notice Warning and Fine

Parents/carers are committing an offence if their child fails to attend school regularly. In some circumstances parents/carers, as a last resort, may be prosecuted under section 444 of The Education Act 1996. An educational penalty notice is an early intervention strategy, which does not require an appearance in court whilst still securing an improvement in a child's attendance. Non-payment of a penalty notice will trigger, where appropriate, the fast-track prosecution process under the provision of section 444, of the 1996 Education Act. Educational Penalty notices are fixed at £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. All fines are collected and retained by the Local Authority.

Reasons for Educational Penalty Notices

- Clear and open truancy
- Parents and carers actively allowing absence.
- If a child has 14 recorded sessions (7 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. (However, if a parent chooses to provide medical evidence this notice will be withdrawn.)
- Persistent late arrival in school (late after register closed) The Department for Education guidance in respect of registration period is 30 minutes, if for example the close of register will be 9.15a.m. A pupil arriving after this time may be marked as U (late after register closes) which is an unauthorised absence.
- Being found in a public place during an exclusion.
- Intervention strategies have failed to bring about an improvement in attendance For more information please Knowsley Council Website <http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/pdf/reviced-penalty-notice-code-of-conduct-absenceexclusion-150414.pdf>

Attendance Matters

Over a year if your child has:

Less than 5 days absence =	98%+ attendance (Very Good)
14 days absence (approx.) =	93.5% attendance (Need for improvement)
20 days absence (approx.) =	90% attendance (Concern)
30 days absence (approx.) =	88% attendance (Major Concern)

If a child has **80% attendance** this means that they have missed approximately **40 days of education** over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

If a child has below **90% attendance** they are classed as a Persistent Absentee. On those occasions when a pattern of poor attendance or lateness is developing the Headteacher and Attendance Lead will work directly with the family to seek solutions and the school attendance service will be informed.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and irregular attendance.
- Regular attenders make good progress academically.
- Regular attenders maintain good friendship groups.
- Regular attenders have a positive attitude to learning and school.
- Regular attenders have a positive transfer to secondary school.
- Regular attenders are more likely to be successful later on in life.

Responsibilities

In order for this policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority, and convey to the pupils by their behaviour, the importance of the education being provided. This means ensuring that all staff arrive to lessons on time and are well prepared. Parents or Carers should inform the school as soon as possible of the reason for a child's absence and provide any further information that may be required.

This may take the form of:

- Message on Parent app.
- note sent into school.
- phone call.
- text message.
- Email.
- leave of absence request (Parent app)
- personal contact
- Parents may need to provide medical evidence for longer absences of 5 days or more.

School Actions

We will encourage good attendance in school by:

- Accurately completing registers at the beginning of each session (morning and afternoon).
- The classes with 100% attendance will ring the bell.
- Each week children with 100% will be put in a raffle, one child from each class will be chosen to attend afternoon tea on Monday afternoon.
- Giving out an award in assembly each week for the class with the best attendance.
- Publishing the best attendance and punctuality in each year group in the school's newsletter and website.
- Performing regular attendance checks.
- Raising awareness of good attendance with leaflets home to parents/guardians. The leaflets are a visual reminder of the impact of poor attendance on a child's achievement.
- Giving out rewards to children with improved attendance in a half term.
- Giving out rewards (certificates, medals, trophies etc) for 100% attendance on a termly/annual basis.
- KS2 Children have attendance cards/dairies to focus their awareness (stamp the card for being in school and on time).
- Working in partnership with the LA through initiatives to promote attendance.
- Meeting and working with parents whose children's attendance causes concerns.

Absence Procedures

First Response

Where no contact is made to the school office, the Pastoral Lead, Miss Clarke will firstly send a text message to the contact numbers for each child then also phone the parent/guardian on a daily basis to obtain reasons for absence. Such calls are always logged on SIMS, and the class teacher informed. School will inform the School Attendance Service of absences if at stage 3 or 4. We will undertake home visits to any child's home address if no contact is made to explain reasons for absence or if the child's irregular attendance is a cause for concern.

Letters

If we have concerns regarding your child's attendance or punctuality, we will inform you by letter.

Attendance Panel Meetings

If your child's attendance drops to below 90% at any time you may be invited into school to meet with the Pastoral Lead, Miss Clarke, a member of Senior Leadership Team, school nurse and School Attendance Service.

School Refusal

Reluctant attenders/school refusal

You should do everything possible to encourage your child to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be school-based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, please discuss this with the school at the earliest opportunity and the school will do everything possible to resolve. Colluding with your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse. School refusal/school phobia is a psychological condition that usually has been medically diagnosed. Other arrangements may be put in place for a child with genuine school phobia.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact the Pastoral Lead, Miss Clarke immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch!

Throughout this policy the term parent is used to refer to an individual who falls within the definition of section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This includes all biological parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children's Act 1989); and any person who although not a biological parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and looks after, irrespective of what that relationship is with that child.

Anti Bullying Policies and Procedures

Ravenscroft Community Primary School has a clear zero tolerance with respect to bullying or similar behaviour. Attendance is closely related to behaviour, and both should be tackled using the staged approach to intervention. In particular, bullying and other forms of disruptive behaviour can lead to poor attendance from some pupils. Effective approaches to promoting and maintaining good rates

of attendance, therefore, also include good behaviour management based on clear boundaries and a balance of sanctions and rewards.

Statement of Commitment from the Board of Governors

This Attendance Policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of Governors. All staff, pupils and their parents will be made aware of the policy. Every Board of governors meeting will include the topic of attendance. The Board of Governors takes an active interest in this area of the school's life. The head teacher oversees this area of the school's life and reviews details on a weekly basis and takes proactive action weekly. The Head teacher and Board of Governors are committed to ensuring that monitoring is carried out with respect to attendance and achievement. This information will be used as necessary to inform and change policies, procedures, and practice to support each individual child.

The school will reinforce its responsibility by taking every opportunity to relay this policy in communications to parents. Regular items in the newsletter, parent's evenings and both formal and informal meetings with individual parents will be used as vehicles for communication. The prospectus will set out school expectations and requirements as regards attendance and punctuality.

Formulation of Documentation

This policy has been formulated and agreed following a whole school review of our attendance and punctuality procedures. It aims to provide teachers, parents/carers and governors with a clear outline of our systems.

Rewards for good and improved attendance include:

Class Rewards

Weekly

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd Certificates for classes with the best attendance and a trophy plus a star on the attendance display in the hall.
- Punctuality certificate for class with the best punctuality and a trophy for the week.
- Afternoon tea weekly with Mrs Coleman, one child from each class who have been in school on time for the week.

Weekly rewards or initiatives to support punctuality and attendance with individual classes.

Half Termly

- Class with the best attendance will receive a special activity; disco, movie, pizza treat etc.
- Class with 98%-99.9% attendance receives Silver Certificate and Silver Medal.
- Class with 96% - 97.9% attendance receives Bronze Certificate and Bronze Medal.
- Improved punctuality receives a certificate and reward.
- Any child whose attendance has improved after being monitored receives a certificate.

Annually

- Class with best attendance receives a special prize such as reward activity.

Individual Rewards

Term 1

- All children with **97% -100%** attendance from September - December will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge) and will be entered into a prize draw to win £10.00 Voucher.
- Improved attendance award - £5 voucher and certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - £ 5 voucher and certificate.

Term 2

- All children with **97% -100%** attendance from January – April will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge)
- All children with **97%-100%** attendance from September – April will receive the **Silver Award** (silver certificate, silver badge) and will be entered into a prize draw to win £10.00 voucher.
- Improved attendance award - £5 voucher and certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - £ 5 voucher and certificate.

Term 3

- All children with **97% -100%** attendance from May – July will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge)

- All children with **97% -100%** attendance from January – July will receive the **Silver Award** (silver certificate, silver badge)
- All children with **97% -100%** attendance from September – July will receive the **Gold Award** (gold certificate, gold badge) and will be invited to attend our end of year trip.
- Improved attendance award - £5 voucher and certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - £ 5 voucher and certificate.