



## Attendance Policy

Approving Body	Redhill Academy Trust Exec Board
Date Approved	
Version	
Supersedes Version	
Review Date	
Legislation	
Further Information/Guidance	

**Review Cycle**      Annually

**Next Review**      September 2020

**Approving Body Governing Body**



# Attendance Policy

## **Aims**

For a child to reach their full educational potential a high level of attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To continue to raise levels of achievement and participation by maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance.
- To inform parents/carers of punctuality and attendance issues.
- To identify the causes of non-attendance and act upon them.
- To ensure all staff understand their roles in the monitoring and recording of attendance.
- To maintain and improve attendance throughout the school through rewarding and target setting.
- To monitor and evaluate the processes on a regular basis.
- To give clear information on expected levels of attendance.

## **Attendance Legislation**

*Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs the child may have. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.*

*If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.*

*Compulsory school age is defined as beginning from age five. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June in school year that they reach sixteen. \**

*The issue of a penalty notice under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act may be considered in cases where a student is absent from school and the absence is unauthorised.*

(\*N.B. Young people are expected to remain in some form of education training or employment with education until the age of 18.)

## **Reporting Student Absence**

When a student is absent from the school, parents must notify no later than 10:00 am on each day of absence either via telephone, text (07860055921 – text only) or writing a note (in advance of a known absence). Failure to report absence will be followed up by the Attendance Clerk.

If phoning the school a voicemail system is in operation and messages can be left at any time. The message left should include in order:

- Student name and form
- Reason for absence
- Anticipated return date

Absences resulting from medical appointments should be confirmed with a copy of the appointment letter/card being sent into school for the attention of Mrs Green, Attendance Clerk. These can be handed in at Student Services

### **First Day Contact**

The school operates a “first day contact” system. This will mean that all parents can expect to be contacted via text message on the first day and any subsequent days of absence if the school has not been previously informed of the reason for absence. A satisfactory response to this communication will authorise this absence; otherwise it will remain as unauthorised.

Where contact has been attempted but no reply is received and absence continues, further action will be taken, which could include:

- Informing key staff
- A home visit
- Following of the “10 day” protocol

### **Holidays**

All parents must complete a holiday form for any holidays to be taken in term time. This is available via the school website (in the term dates section) and should be returned, a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the planned holiday, for the attention of Mrs Green, the Attendance Clerk,. However, the school will not routinely authorise holidays, in line with the Government’s policies. Holidays during term time that are requested in this way but not authorised are marked as G (unauthorised holiday). Where no formal request is made holidays taken in term time will be marked as unauthorised absence. Exceptional circumstances would be authorised at the discretion of a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the school. However, even then we would take into consideration the student’s attendance, what year the student is in and whether any exams or assessments are taking place at the requested time of absence. It is highly unlikely that any holiday requests for students inY11 would be authorised.

### **Punctuality**

A late gate is operated every day and students will receive a break time detention if they arrive late to school without a justifiable reason. This is at the school’s discretion. Persistent punctuality issues will result in further pastoral interventions.

In Year 11 attendance and punctuality figures will be quoted when we are asked to give a reference for Sixth Form, college placements, apprenticeship and training providers as well as part time and full time employment.

The school bell will sound at 08.27 and all students are expected to move to their first lesson. A second bell will ring for the start of the lesson at 08.30.

Students arriving after the close of registers will be marked as absent for that session.

### **The 10 Day Rule**

Students who have failed to attend school for 10 days will be dealt with according to an agreed protocol with the Children Missing Education Officer (CMEO).

1. The Attendance Officer will inform the tutor and Head of House of the beginning of protocol
2. The Attendance Officer will contact the CMEO with the student details, nature of the problem and evidence of school contact.
3. The Attendance Officer/Family Support will attempt to make contact with the student, making a home visit if necessary.
4. Student will be reported as “child missing from education” and further welfare services will become involved.

Policy: Attendance Policy

Version:

Date:

This process will begin automatically once a student reaches the 10th day, but may start earlier at the discretion of the Trust Attendance Manager.

### **Ongoing Monitoring**

Heads of House will meet weekly with SLT and/or the Attendance Officer to monitor all students but in particular:

- student premium students,
- free school meals students,
- looked after students,
- students who are persistently absent (below 90%)
- SEN students

Throughout this process accurate records will be kept.

### **Electronic Registration SIMS**

All staff will use electronic registration SIMS for their tutor group and their subject classes. Where this is not possible, the member of staff affected must inform the Attendance Clerk immediately and take a paper register of the group – this can be obtained from the Student Services in emergency.

Any missing or late registers will be chased up by the Attendance Clerk.

### **Persistent Absence**

When a student is identified as a potential persistent absentee the Attendance Officer will follow the following procedure:

1. When a student is identified as having 95% attendance, an initial contact will be made by the Attendance Officer with the parent and a conversation with the student will take place. Targets will be set to improve attendance.
2. A student's attendance will be monitored closely, but if no improvements are made and the student's attendance continues to drop then other forms of action will be taken. Parents or carers will be asked to provide medical evidence for future absences which can be from the GP, nurse or pharmacist.

If the attendance is 93% and below and the absences are unauthorised, the following procedure will be followed:

1. When a student is identified as having 93% attendance, with unauthorised absences, a letter will be sent out to the parent by the Attendance Officer inviting the parent/carer in for an attendance panel meeting with the Senior Trust Attendance Officer and the Head of House and/ or Assistant Head. This is to highlight the situation and to predominantly offer support to parents/ carers and the student to help improve their school attendance.
2. If parents/carers do not engage with the Attendance Officer and the attendance is below 90%, parents/ carers will then receive a parental responsibility letter. This is part of the legal process and officially informs parents that their child will be monitored over a specified amount of time. This letter is sent individually to each person in charge of looking after the student and for each of their children in this position. Parents/ carers will again be offered support to help the student improve their attendance. Home visits will be carried out by the Attendance Officer if there are further absences to offer support for the family. If there are no further absences, then the student will still be monitored for their attendance, but only as before the attendance panel.
3. If a students' attendance has continued to decline after the monitoring period of the parental responsibility letter has ended, the parent/ carer will then receive a fixed penalty notice. This will again be over a specified amount of time. This is a legal document and can lead to a fine or prosecution if there are further absences.

Policy: Attendance Policy

Version:

Date:

Please note that the school is keen to support in whichever way they can to avoid any punitive measures and that court action is only seen as a last resort.

Where students are meeting or exceeding their target we will make every effort to recognise and reward improvements in attendance.

## **Truancy**

Truancy from school is dealt with as a high priority. Internal truancy will usually be dealt with by pastoral leaders and result in the sanction of after school detention. For more persistent truancy from school the Attendance Officer and pastoral leaders will discuss the case and agree the best course of action. This is likely to involve a meeting with parents to discuss any issues contributing to the truancy, arrangements for monitoring future attendance and the organisation of detentions for making up lost time.

Recurrent problems with truancy from school will be referred to the Attendance Officer for further actions.

## **Truancy Sweep**

Section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives police officers in England and Wales the power to take students back to school or to another designated place.

Truancy sweeps will be carried out throughout the year without notice.

## **Signing In and Out**

Students with appointments must show an appointment card or note at **Student Services** where they will sign out. Marks will be entered for the student for the remainder of the session where appropriate. Students sent home due to illness must go via the medical room to sign out.

Students who arrive late to school for any reason will sign in at Student Services. Their register mark will be entered onto SIMS, along with the number of minutes late and, where appropriate, the reason for lateness.

## **Reward Strategies**

There are a number of rewards put in place to positively encourage outstanding attendance. These include:

- Inter-tutor and inter-house competitions.
- House points for good / outstanding attendance. This contributes to further personal and house rewards.
- Termly 100% positive attendance certificates celebrated in house assemblies.
- Short term rewards.
- Praise phone call.
- Praise letter / postcard for improved attendance.

## **Note to parents**

The School aims to raise achievement levels by working with students, parents and schools, other agencies and the community, to improve the attendance of the students and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## **What happens if my child does not attend school regularly?**

Your child's school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the LEA. If your child is not attending school regularly the Trust Attendance Officer may visit or write to you and will work with you to address the child's attendance difficulties. You may be offered a parenting contract by your child's school. This is a formal agreement

Policy: Attendance Policy

Version:

Date:

in which the school agrees to provide you with support and you agree to do certain things to help improve your child's attendance.

As a parent, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge. You run the risk of being taken to court.

All the staff at Tupton Hall School are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance. We hope that you can work with us on this matter.