

The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools



Attendance Policy

Reviewed by: (T Ward; February 2022)

Approved by governors:

Review date:

Executive Headteacher: T Ward

Chair of Governors: P. Gibbons

The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools

Attendance Policy

Introduction

The purpose of our attendance policy is to:

- Establish clear and effective procedures for administration which are understood by staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that we comply with the necessary legal requirements
- Enable other appropriate agencies to access the information that they need
- Ensure that any pupils presenting poor levels of attendance and punctuality are noted, monitored, and appropriate action is taken to support families

Aims

At the Ribblesdale Federation, we aim to ensure that our high expectations lead to maximum achievement by all. Central to the fulfilment of this aim is the need for a consistently good level of attendance and punctuality by all our pupils. We work in partnership with staff, parents, pupils, the local community and the Education Welfare Service in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils. The school monitors attendance and ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Broad Guidelines

The school day begins at 8.45 am, with registration at 9am, and finishes at 3.30 pm.

Registration period:

Morning:

- Main class registration between 9.00 –9.05 a.m. Registers closed at 9.05 am
- Absences to be noted and sent to the school office by 9.05am.

Afternoon:

- Main class registration takes place at 1.00pm. Registers closed as soon as possible after 1.05pm.

If it is appropriate, in recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather or occasional transport difficulties) the school will keep its registers open for a longer period.

The class teacher or supply teacher may take the class register. Log in details for supply teachers are held in the school office. The Marking Code can be found in each school office. Any school educational visits, half terms, holidays and other school closures such as INSET days will be noted in the registers.

After registration the administration staff will be responsible for checking the registers to ensure that all children who are marked as absent can be accounted for. If a child is absent and we have had no explanation, office staff will telephone parents to find out the reason for absence. If any problems are identified then the school administrator will advise the Executive Headteacher, or if unavailable a member of the safeguarding team, who will ensure that the appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

Lateness

Pupils are expected to be at school on time each day. Punctuality is encouraged as an act of courtesy and provides children with a clear start to their day with their peers and teachers. Punctuality also ensures that teaching time is not wasted.

After 9.00am or 1.10pm any child arriving late will be asked for the reasons for lateness. The office staff will ascertain whether the child is having a hot meal or a packed lunch and the dinner register will be completed. The kitchen staff will be advised of changes to hot meals.

If a pupil arrives late three times in a row after closure of register then the Executive Headteacher will raise the concern with parents to try to understand the underlying issue.

Collections

Pupils are expected to be collected on time each day and teachers should endeavour to ensure pupils leave on time.

Parents must be available from 3.30pm for collection. If a parent would like another adult to collect their child they should give advance notice to the class teacher or pass a message via the office. The school will not release children to other adults without prior notice.

Parents should inform the school of any known delays and the school will keep the children at school in the school office until the parent arrives. Staff will call parents if no-one has arrived to collect a child by 3.40pm.

If a child is collected late on a regular basis, the Executive Headteacher will raise this issue with the parents to try to understand the problem and identify a solution. If the child needs to access after school care due to late collection, parents will be charged for this service.

Children in Year 5 and 6

Our federation understands the importance of building independence in children. This may involve walking home from school with friends unaccompanied by adults. If parents of children in year 5 and 6 wish for their child to walk home unaccompanied they must notify the school by completing a notification form. All other children are expected to be collected by a responsible adult.

Procedure for Noting Absence

On every day of absence the parent or carer must contact the School Office advising the school of their child's absence.

If a pupil returns to school and no reason for absence has been provided the procedure will be:

- Liaise with parents either by phone or in person, probably at the end of the day.
- If still no reason provided a letter will be sent home explaining the issue.
- At any of these stages the school can refer the case to the Education Welfare Officer.

Requests for Absence

Parents do not have a right to take their children out of school during school time. It is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher for pupils to take absence of any kind during term time.

Permission may be granted for the following:

- If a child is in an approved drama/dance performance or sporting activity for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority.
- If a child is involved in an exceptional occasion - in authorising such an absence the circumstances of the case and the overall pattern of attendance may be considered.
- Service personnel and other employees prevented from taking holiday outside term time
- When a family needs to spend time together after a crisis or other exceptional circumstance.

- Parents who are subject to a strict and non-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

Parents are required to complete and return a leave of absence form (available from the school office) at least 4 weeks before the proposed dates of absence. The absence form is returned to the parent and a copy kept in the child's school file.

For term time holidays, absences of 5 days or more (10 sessions +) will trigger referral for a [penalty notice](#).

For all absences, including sickness and medical appointments, on each day of absence the parent or carer must contact the School Office advising the school of their child's absence. Evidence is required of all medical appointments. This can be a copy of an appointment card, letter or text or a copy of a prescription.

Legal Sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Reporting to Parents

Parents will be given an annual summary of their child's attendance with their child's end of year report. Where attendance has caused a concern or is close to the threshold of persistent absence set by the government (10%) this will prompt an urgent discussion with parents.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The Executive Headteacher takes the lead with class teachers in identifying patterns of attendance that cause concerns. Parents will be invited in to discuss underlying causes and to develop an action plan for improvement.

The federation celebrates weekly attendance in Friday assemblies and ensure children understand the value of good attendance at school. Children who achieve 100% attendance across an academic year receive special recognition at our end of year celebration assembly.

Monitoring Responsibility

Office Staff -

- Ensure that registers are completed using the correct symbols and are up to date.
- Transfer data to ScholarPack attendance module when necessary.
- Complete termly returns for census.
- Report to senior leaders re patterns in absence and lateness.

- To act on reports of any patterns in absence or lateness, including adding concerns to CPOMS, and liaise with class teacher and SENDCo if applicable.
- To track 100% attendance and those whose attendance falls below 90%, raising these with the Executive Headteacher.

Teachers -

- To monitor from time to time arrival of pupils in the playground.
- To register pupils as late who arrive after 9.05am.
- To use correct registration codes for absences.
- To ensure the statement included in the school prospectus is in line with the school policy and practices.
- To ensure that they, and all staff, are aware of the importance of registers. They may be required in a court of law e.g. a prosecution's case for non-attendance.

The Executive Headteacher-

- The Executive Headteacher will keep parents, pupils and governors informed of the policy and practice and its impact.
- The Executive headteacher reports on attendance to governors through the Executive Headteacher's termly report.
- The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the federation, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- The Executive Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary. All registers to be kept for a minimum of 7 years.

The Governing Board-

- Where attendance is causing concern, governors set targets based on recommendations and ensure that targets take account of any government targets which may have been set for vulnerable groups.
- The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole federation on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Dissemination of the policy

The policy is available to parents and carers and pupils via the school website.