



Rednock School

Quality, Partnership, Success

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| Proposed Policy: | Attendance | Responsibility Of: | Mrs J Hemper |
| Date of Ratification: | July 2017 | Date of Review: | July 2019 |

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rednock School recognises that high levels of attendance are a key factor in reaching high levels of achievement.

Principles

We all recognise that education is important. Missing school means missing out on learning. Students need to be at school on time, ready to learn, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence that can result in legal action by the Local Authority. It is important for the student, parents/carers and school to work in partnership together to overcome barriers to attendance.

Reasons for absence

Every half day of absence has to be recorded legally as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, such as illness or another unavoidable reason.

Unauthorised absences are those not considered reasonable and for which no permission has been given. These are an offence by the parent/carer and can include:

- Keeping children off school without a good reason e.g. shopping, looking after other children, minding the house, birthdays, day trips etc
- Truancy
- Absences which remain unexplained
- Arrival at school after close of register (9.00 a.m.)
- Holidays which have not been approved as exceptional circumstances

Leave may be granted on compassionate grounds in an emergency (e.g. following the death of a close relative). Such applications for leave, including requests for holidays in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Head Teacher, using the appropriate form – see Appendix B. Please note - penalty notices may be issued for holidays that are unauthorised.

Resolving problems

Parents / carers are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving problems. Rednock has a strong support system consisting of the Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor, Community Support Officers, Community Leaders and personal tutors.

(Please see leaflet Appendix A 'Illness & Absence from School')

Where problems persist parents / carers and students will be invited to a meeting and an Attendance Improvement Plan will be written. Failure to succeed on this plan may lead to legal proceedings - see Penalty Notices below.

Procedures

In an ideal world we would want all of our students to be able to attend 100% of the time. We recognise that this is not always possible. However schools have a responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This level of absence adds up to missing over 100 lessons over the course of the year, or over a month of schooling. Students who miss this much school are called 'persistent absentees' by the government, regardless of the reason for their absence.

Responsibilities

a) Parents

- should ensure punctual arrival by their child at school by 8.30 a.m. in time to arrive in morning registration at 8.35am., but should not arrive before 8 a.m.
- should notify the school immediately by telephone/text if their child is ill and at the latest by 9.30am. and telephone /text again on each subsequent day of absence

b) Students

- should ensure their punctual arrival to school (by 8.30 at the latest) and to all lessons.
- report to main reception if they are late and sign in.
- should NOT leave the premises without the express permission of their Community Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the written / verbal permission of their parent / carer.
- should ensure that they catch up on missed work with the support of subject teachers and tutor.
- should use Show My Homework to keep abreast of learning in their absence.

c) Teaching staff

- should take a register of attendance at the start of each lesson (within 10 minutes).
- should provide support and clear guidelines on catching up on missed work.

d) Tutors

- should take a register of attendance at the start of each school session.
- should pass letters of explanation of absence, on receipt, to the Attendance Clerk.
- monitor patterns in absence data at least once per month.
- should arrange a 1:1 meeting with any student that has an attendance of less than 93% (or 90% during Term 1) - stage 1 of the Rednock Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Strategy. Record details of this meeting in the Interventions log in SIMs.
- 6th Form Tutors should review and update their tutor group registers on a weekly basis.

e) Community Leaders

- should oversee monitoring of absence data by tutors on a monthly basis and communicate concerns to the Leadership Team Line Manager in regular meetings.
- should review the list of students that have an attendance of less than 90% and confirm whether a letter home to parents is appropriate – stage 2 of the Rednock Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Strategy. Record details of the follow up meeting / conversation in the Interventions log in SIMs
- should reward excellent attendance by individual student and tutor groups.

- meet with Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor every fortnight in the Community Student Support Panel meeting to monitor attendance issues, establish patterns and inform interventions.
- f) **Assistant Head**
- should liaise with the Attendance Clerk and the Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor at a fortnightly meeting to monitor patterns in absence. Where student attendance has fallen below 90%, liaise with the Community Leader and initiate stage 3 of the Rednock Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Strategy.
- g) **Attendance Clerk**
- should make daily contact with parents/carers of any student whose absence has not been explained by 9.30am.
 - should provide termly updates on absence data for the Assistant Head and Community Leaders.
 - should issue Student Attendance sheets to tutors, Community Leaders, Assistant Head, Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor following the review of monthly absence data.
 - should gather data on student attendance for LA/DfE reports etc.
 - should liaise with Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor regarding the Issue of fixed penalty notices to parents.
 - should conduct spot checks on registers to ensure they are completed correctly.

Rednock Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Strategy – 4 Stage Procedure

Initial Concern – Attendance falls below 93% (or 90% in Term 1) – Letter to parents sent by Attendance Clerk. Review period 4-6 weeks. 4 + unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during review period will result in the student moving to Stage 1.

Stage 1

A letter is sent to parents by the Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor. A Student Attendance Agreement is completed with the student and the Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor. Review period 4-6 weeks. 4 + unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during review period will result in the student moving to Stage 2.

Stage 2

A letter is sent to parents by the Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor who will arrange a Home visit and / or a meeting in school. Medical evidence will now be required to authorise further absences due to illness. Review period 4-6 weeks. 4 + unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during review period and /or pre-arranged home visits unsuccessful – will result in the student moving to Stage 3.

Stage 3

Letter to parents from Attendance, Welfare & Parent Support Advisor inviting them to an Attendance Improvement Meeting. First review 4-6 weeks. A total of 28+ unauthorised absences or 20 continuous unauthorised absences will result in the student moving to Stage 4.

Stage 4

Referral to The Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team – Request for legal proceedings

A student can be placed on any of the stages without having moved from stage to stage depending upon need. A student does not need to have been on all stages of the procedure before a referral is made to the Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team.

Penalty Notices

Parents/carers are required to ensure education for their child by that child's regular attendance at school; failure to do so could result in a Penalty Notice (fine) being issued. The Penalty Notice will state the fine payable and the timescale for doing so. All payments are made to the Local Authority. Penalty Notices may be issued by the Education, Entitlement & Inclusion Team or Local Authority for:

- Unauthorised holidays
- Persistent lateness (after registers have closed)

Term-Time Holidays

Term-time holidays should be avoided. Leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parents / carers should make a request to the Head Teacher, explaining the nature of the exceptional circumstances – please see Appendix B. Taking leave without permission will be classed as 'unauthorised' absence and can be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Wherever possible parents / carers are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where such appointments are unavoidable the school should be informed in advance if at all possible. Appointment cards should be shown to tutors and then to the receptionist prior to signing out of school. A 'present' mark may still be awarded if the student attends for as much of a session (morning / afternoon) as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than miss a whole day.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. (We aspire to 100% attendance, but attendance targets expect a minimum of 97%). Equally parents / carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All of the staff at Rednock School are committed to working closely with parents / carers as the best way to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance. We hope that parents / carers can work in partnership with us on this matter.

Associated Policies and Procedures

Appendix A - Illness and Absence from School – leaflet for parents

Appendix B - Absence Request Form

Appendix C - Rednock Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Strategy