

# Ropsley C of E Primary School

## Pupil Attendance Policy



Adopted	Signed	Review	Equality Impact Assessment	Reviewed against our Vision	Amendments
January 2023	<i>Ann Cook</i>	January 2024	No	Yes	N/A

## Pupil Attendance Policy

The Attendance Team	
Mr Fred Mann	Attendance Governor
Mrs Ann Cook	Headteacher
Mrs Georgina Gardner	School Administrator
Miss Louise North	Pastoral Lead

### Introduction

As a school, we are committed to ensuring that all children achieve the highest possible level of attendance. We promote good attendance and punctuality because it has a positive effect on achievement and progress and is a necessary life skill.

Our policy applies to all children on roll in this school and is available to all parents/carers on the school website. Children who are persistently late or absent from school soon fall behind in their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department of Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

### We aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all children, apart from those with recognised serious health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Ensure that our policy applies to all Nursery and Reception aged children to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and Lincolnshire County Council Attendance Team.
- Provide clear guidelines for pupils and their families.
- Regularly remind parents/carers of school policy and practice.
- Raise the profile of attendance among children and their families.
- Carefully monitor attendance.

### Partnership

The following documents and activities stress the importance of good attendance and punctuality:

- Home/School Agreement
- Newsletters
- Information for new parents
- Our website
- A system of rewards
- End of Year pupil reports

## **Unexplained Absence - Safeguarding and Children Missing Education**

Attendance, absence, and exclusions are closely monitored. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour-based abuse, or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures. The DSL, in conjunction with the attendance team, will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. At least two different contact numbers will be held on file for a child which can be accessed and used by the school in case of an absence/emergency. Should a child be linked to outside agencies and have a Child Protection Plan the Social Worker will be informed immediately should an absence occur.

If a child is absent from school and we have had no contact with them after efforts have been made to determine their whereabouts and we are unable to locate them and we believe that the family may have moved away leaving no contact details to find them, we will alert Lincolnshire Children Missing in Education immediately. All absences that are not accounted for will be actioned immediately by our Attendance Officer following the procedures below.

During Days 1-3 of any pupil absence which is not accounted for (no contact between home-school/no reason provided for absence), the following procedure is followed:

- All absences are investigated by our administrator. If no reason is forthcoming from parents/carers regarding an absence, then the parents receive a message asking for a reason for the absence. If there is no message, parents are phoned. If there is no response to the phone call, a voicemail message is left where possible requesting the parent calls the school. We will contact emergency contacts if we are unable to contact parents. This process is repeated for each day of the absence if no response is given to ascertain why a child is absent. Class teachers may also follow up on any unexplained absences when a child returns to school.
- If we are unable to establish a reason for absence and the absence procedures outlined above have taken place, on the 3rd day of absence, the attendance officer accompanied by another member of staff will visit the address of the pupil to check on the pupil's welfare. In some cases, this may take place at any stage of the absence, and this will be determined by individual risk assessments being made. Consideration will be given to informing the Local Authority if there are any concerns. Where a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of more than 3 school days, the school follows the Lincolnshire County Council's attendance procedures. These are available within our Safeguarding Policy on the school website.
- The school uses contextual safeguarding information to assess the risk level around any unexplained absence and reserves the right to carry out safe and well checks and home visits as and when appropriate at any point within a period of absence, to locate and establish the whereabouts of the child and assess their safety and wellbeing. Staff will use their professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the child's whereabouts before notifying the police. Parents/carers will always be informed before contact with the police is made unless a child is at immediate risk of harm and a police response is needed. This will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

- At all times, school staff will liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Lincolnshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:  
has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team
- does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school.

Where reasonably possible, all schools must hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This will enable us to contact a ‘responsible adult’ should a child be missing from education or a welfare or safeguarding issue or concern as identified. (KCSIE 2022).

### **School Procedures**

- The school day begins at 8.50 a.m. Members of staff are on duty at the points of entry to school, from 8.40 a.m
- The teaching staff register children at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions
- Registers close at 9.15 a.m. Children who arrive between 8.50 am and 9.15 am will receive a late mark (symbol L)
- Children who arrive after the registers close at 9.15 am will be marked as absent in the register (symbol U). The time of their arrival at school will be recorded via the electronic InVentry signing-in system along with the reason why.
- Latecomers are requested to report to the main office. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the office staff to ensure that the registers have been altered accordingly
- Registers are returned to the office following registration.

### **Appointments**

- Parents are requested to let us know about medical/dental appointments in advance. This helps us to record the absence accurately and ensures teachers can plan for a child’s absence accordingly.
- If parents/carers take or return their children, before or following an appointment, they will use the electronic InVentry signing-in system. Registers are not changed.
- As a school, we appreciate that consultancy appointments/hospital stays are incredibly difficult to change/avoid and therefore at the discretion of the Head Teacher whilst attendance at these appointments will be recorded in the register as an absence such absence will not prevent a child from being included in the end of year 100% Award Certificates. Parents are requested to provide a copy of the letter requesting that their child attends a consultancy appointment/stay at the hospital to the school office.

### **Absences**

- Parents/carers are requested to inform the school office, on the first day of absence, giving a reason for the absence
- All telephone messages are logged and explanations are recorded on our pupil’s absence sheets.
- Parents are requested to obtain a doctor’s note if a period of illness lasts longer than 10 days
- If a child’s attendance is cause for concern the attendance officer will contact, you directly to discuss the issues. If there is no subsequent improvement you will receive a letter informing you that your child’s attendance is being monitored.
- If during a monitoring period, a child has a further period of absence the school will consider referral to the Attendance Team at Lincolnshire County Council who reserve the right to issue a fine.
- A daily register check is undertaken by the school office and shared with the school attendance officer who will then take any further action necessary.

- The Head Teacher working closely with the school attendance officer monitors attendance on a half termly basis
- Half-termly attendance letters are issued to parents if a child's attendance causes concern.

### **Unreported absences**

- Staff in the school office, will check to see if we have received a message from parents on the first day of absence. Reasons for absence are then recorded. If there is no message from the parents the school administrator will telephone them.
- If parents/carers do not respond to this request, the school attendance officer will then telephone and record the call within our safeguarding program (My Concern)
- In the case of unexplained absences, the school attendance officer will carry out a risk assessment and may visit the pupil's home address in line with our safeguarding arrangements (never alone.)
- If a repeated pattern of absence continues or if attendance falls below 90%, a meeting will take place with parents and if necessary a referral is made to the Family Support Service
- Parents/carers are informed that ultimately, the LA will pursue cases of poor attendance through the courts

### **Holidays**

- All holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absences.
- Parents/carers are requested to complete a holiday request form, available from the school office, in advance of the proposed holiday so that all pupil absence is accounted for.
- The school will consider issuing penalty notices to all parents who choose to remove their child from school to take a family holiday where the child's attendance is below 95%.
- Parents/carers who feel strongly that their circumstances are exceptional are asked to put their request for a holiday during term time in writing directly to the Head Teacher for her consideration.
- Following a request for a holiday you will receive a letter from the Head Teacher either informing you that the absence is unauthorised and will incur a penalty notice or that due to exceptional circumstances, the absence will not be authorised but will not incur a penalty notice.
- Where leave of absence has not been granted, and parents still take children on holiday, the school may request the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act state that penalty notices may be used as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and this allows the parent or carer to discharge liability for conviction by paying a set fine.
- Completed forms are retained in the office and the information is recorded on our school's holiday recording sheet. This makes it easier to track absences due to holidays
- Failure to inform the school of the reason for absence may result in a direct referral to the Family Support Service for further investigation.

### **Punctuality**

- All incidents of late drop-off or pick-up by parents are formally recorded via the electronic InVentry signing-in system in the main reception area.
- The school Attendance Officer has formal contact with parents whose children are persistently late
- A standard letter may be issued if appropriate
- If a repeated pattern of lateness continues, a referral is made to the Lincolnshire Attendance Team or Early Help

### **Persistent Absentees**

- If attendance falls below 90% parents will be requested to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer to discuss the issues and work together to improve the situation if there is no specific reason to explain the absence i.e. illness
- This may lead to a referral to Early Help for support
- If absence continues, a penalty notice may be issued by the Local Authority.

### **The role of staff**

- Class Teachers are to notify the Head Teacher of any concerns regarding the attendance of pupils in their class immediately so that the necessary action can be taken
- Class Teachers should promote good attendance wherever possible.
- The Senior Leadership Team works closely with the school attendance officer to monitor weekly class attendance and follow up with parents of children whose attendance is giving cause for concern

### **The role of parents**

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments during school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor/dentist (Appointment card/letter/text message)
- Informing the school in advance of any holidays by submitting a withdrawal from learning request to the Head Teacher
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

- Integris computerised system is used to collect attendance data. This is imputed by our School Administrator and monitored weekly by the attendance officer unless there are concerns which need daily monitoring.
- This system of recording enables the Head Teacher to have access to a variety of reports and is used to monitor trends and patterns of absence.
- Attendance is monitored externally by the Local authority, the DFE and Fisher Family Trust.

### **Rewards**

#### **Yearly Certificate for Good Attendance**

- Certificates will be awarded to those pupils achieving 100% for the whole year

### **Involvement of Governors**

Governors take an active interest in the monitoring of attendance through:

- The Headteacher termly reports to the Governing Body
- Regular visits from our SEND/Attendance Governor

Policy/Vision impact review

*In God's image, we strive and shine: with happy hearts and inspired minds*



**Our Vision**

**Our vision is to be a caring, happy and inclusive church school that is at the heart of our community. We strive to provide an excellent education which develops a lifelong love of learning in a global context. We see all members of our school family as valued and precious in the eyes of God. We seek to do this through an innovative, engaging and inspiring curriculum that encourages us all to flourish.**

**‘Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible  
St. Francis of Assisi**

Policy Name	Pupil Attendance Policy 2023
Completed by	Ann Cook
Date	January 2023

<p>How will this policy affect ALL members of our school family? Pupils, parents, staff, governors, members of the community, outside agencies, and charities (global, national, and local.)</p> <p>To support pupils learning and well-being by helping them to achieve good attendance and flourish. To support staff with planning and securing good attainment. To support families through access to pastoral programs where necessary. To ensure compliance with legislation.</p>
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Impact	
<b>Pupils</b>	Pupils make better progress when they attend regularly and are more likely to build and maintain good friendships with their peers.
<b>Parents</b>	Parents are clear about what is expected in terms of managing a child's attendance. They know how to access help and support if their child is anxious or worried about attending school.
<b>Staff</b>	All staff are clear about expectations and know when poor attendance becomes unacceptable. Their work is valued!
<b>Governors</b>	Governors have the information they need to support and challenge the school.
<b>Community</b>	Children are in school and safe. We are working hard to ensure we are a happy school that encourages all to flourish. Pupils understand their role as courageous advocates and this supports our stakeholders in becoming happy citizens that contribute to their community.

Are any changes to the policy recommended?	
How can we better ensure that good management of our available funds helps the children to become involved in community projects and understand that they are agents of change and can make a difference. Should we have a small pot of money to support projects that do that?	
What could we look at to track the impact of the policy?	
When will this policy be reviewed	January 2024

