Attendance Policy

Introduction and Aims

Poor attendance disadvantages children. We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all our pupils.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (section 444) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the education authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Attendance is a key whole-school improvement issue: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of students and the standards thereby achieved by the school. This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE).

Through this policy, Rosemary Works School aims to:

- improve the overall attendance of children at school.

- improve children's attainment through good attendance.

- encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time.

- make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers, the head teacher and the board of directors.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for attendance issues, reviewing the data and following up on any concerns.

- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school, including ensuring accurate attendance records are kept.

- Attendance issues are reported at least termly to the board of directors, who monitor the data and ensure that the school is fulfilling its statutory duties.

- Parents are expected to ensure their children attend school every day, arriving on time and communicate with the school if a child is unable to attend. Parents ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less that 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

The Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead should work to manage risks, ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

Register Procedures

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. It is kept electronically for Reception to Year 6 and manually for Nursery Class. Manual registers may be used if necessary, for example in the case of internet failure. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

Rosemary Works School procedures to for maintaining registers including the procedures for marking registers:

Procedure	Person responsible
1. Registers **must** be taken at the start of the morning session and afternoon sessions at 9:30am (10:00am for Nursery Class) and 1:30pm.	Teachers
2. On each occasion a school must record whether a child was present, absent or present at approved educational activity using the appropriate code (see Appendix 1).	Teachers/Admin staff
3. Pupils should only be marked present if they are in the room when the register is called or are confirmed to have been seen by a teacher (e.g. if in a music lesson)	Teachers
3. Spaces must not be left in the register – unknown absences to be recorded as "N"	Teachers
4. Registers are checked and school to call parents as soon as practicable to find out the whereabouts of any absent children where no reason has been provided, updating the register accordingly.	Admin staff
5. Children arriving late are marked with the appropriate code (register to close 30 minutes after opening.)	Admin staff
6. Daily registers to be printed for emergency use.	Admin staff
7. If the office has been unable to contact parents, continue to contact to obtain an explanation. Register must be amended within 5 days, or the absence is recorded as unauthorised.	Admin staff/teachers

At each registration point, each child is recorded as present, attending an approved off-site educational activity or absent. Every half a day of absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the head teacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away

or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the head teacher. Attendance registers may be kept manually or electronically.

Working in partnership with parents

Absence:

If a child is absent from school, parents should contact the school on the first day of absence and maintain contact with the school throughout the absence. If a child is absent without advance notice, the school will contact the parents and if necessary their emergency contact.

Illness:

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

However, schools can challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

In fact it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing addition services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Attendance is less than 90%

- There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness

- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated

- Where there is particular medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

Requests for leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)

There is a degree of flexibility at Rosemary Works with taking holidays in term time. Parents must email the head teacher in advance of a leave of absence requesting permission stating the dates absent, the reason for the absence and who the child(ren) will be with. The head teacher will consider the frequency of the child's previous absence record before approval. Parents are discouraged to frequently take their children out of school during term time.

Parents can support regular school attendance by:

- Making sure their child leaves for school with plenty of time to arrive on time.

- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parents evenings and other events.

- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding thier child's attendance.

- Working partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.

Late arrival

Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session. School registration will close at 10:00 am for children attending school from Reception Class up to Year 6. Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

Children in Nursery Class should arrive no later than 10:30am. We reserve the right to refuse a child arriving later than this, for example if the class are at an off-site activity. Nursery children arriving after 11:45 will only be admitted if they have eaten lunch before arrival.

Attendance Monitoring

The office staff will check the registers daily to ensure they are completed correctly.

The Head Teacher will monitor attendance and absence data termly and yearly across the school and at an individual level. Additional monitoring may be carried out if concerns are raised.

The Head Teacher will analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts who need additional support with their attendance and will use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. She will look at historic and emerging patterns of absence, then develop strategies to address these patterns.

All registers will be checked, and absences monitored on a regular basis. Schools will analyse individual pupil data to identify quickly patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed by the school where their child's attendance causes concern.

Those children whose attendance falls below national average will be closely monitored and further action considered. School will challenge the attitude of those pupils and parents who give a low priority to attendance.

Pupils with persistent absenteeism will be identified (pupils with more than 10% absence rate) and investigation will take place to identify the underlying reasons for this. If appropriate, an action plan will be put in place to address the reasons for the absence level. The school will hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school. The school will provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day