

Attendance Policy

Approved by RET Board

Approved on April 2023

RET contact Headteacher

Revision due Every 2 years



RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST

1. Rationale

- a. The school seeks to ensure that all our students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.
- b. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment and ethos, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
- c. All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.
- d. The school will establish an effective system of recognition which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping whilst challenging the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- e. To meet these objectives the school will use an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

2. Aims

- a. This policy aims:
 1. To set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of pupils and promote and visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance.
 2. To improve the attendance and punctuality of students (in particular to maximise the number of students attending at the school's target level or better)
 3. To minimise the number of students who are 'persistently absent'
 4. To ensure that students do not become 'missing from education'
 5. To make attendance and punctuality priorities for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers (including supply), associate staff, leaders and governors
 6. To have clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks
 7. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
 8. To gather and analyse attendance data regularly, including benchmarking with local, regional and national levels.
 9. To develop further positive and consistent communication between home and school
 10. To implement an effective system of recognition and consequences that support the attendance policy
 11. To promote effective partnerships with the local services and agencies with responsibility for improving attendance and wider student welfare, e.g. the Educational Welfare Service
 12. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence
 13. To provide additional support for pupils with medical conditions and/or SEND

3. Implementation

- a. Registers – by law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
 1. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The school will use the relevant attendance code to indicate whether students are present or absent.

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2. AM and PM registers will be kept open for a reasonable length of time and students will be marked as late if they arrive after the session has started and before the register has closed. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent using the relevant code.
 3. Please see the school's website for information on when registers close.
- b. Absence
1. Parents are asked to contact the school using the relevant system when their child is absent, giving an indication of the problem and when they expect him/her to return.
 2. Relevant staff enter the absence on the student's register and relevant staff receive daily reports of absences.
 3. If Form Tutors receive a note explaining an absence, they will pass the details on to the relevant staff member.
 4. Any student unaccounted for by the end of Period One triggers an 'absence call', generally via an automated phone service that alerts parents to their child's absence.
 5. Letters are generated at regular intervals alerting parents to any concerns with students' attendance and asking parents to give reasons for any unaccounted absences. These are distributed by relevant staff members.
 6. Unexplained or unauthorised absences of two or more days are referred to the staff and contact home will be made, if necessary, to get further details.
 7. Those students identified as a cause for concern will be asked to provide medical evidence for any absences.
 8. Medical or dental appointments – absence from school for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parent/carers must inform the school before the appointment and can do so by contacting the school through the usual channels.
 9. Absence in term time – applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.
 - a) The school makes it clear that term time absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
 - b) Parents and carers wanting to request a term time absence should write directly to the Headteacher, explaining their circumstances.
 - c) Cases of unauthorised absence being taken may be referred to the Educational Welfare Service for further action according to local policy/guidance. This may include proceedings to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.
 - d) The school is also able to make referrals to other external agencies that may have an impact on improving attendance.
 - e) When a student has had an extended period of absence, it may be deemed appropriate to have a reintegration meeting. The relevant pastoral lead will lead this and may involve the Head of Year and other key professionals such as the SENCO, or Education Welfare Officer. The aim is to support the student's return to school and ensure that they have the best opportunity to improve their attendance and achievement.

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- c. Punctuality
 - 1. The school recognises the disruption caused to teaching and learning by persistent lateness to school and lessons.
 - 2. Where issues arise, lateness and patterns of lateness will be dealt with by relevant staff members, involving parents/carers where appropriate.
 - 3. Cases of persistent lateness may be referred to the Educational Welfare Service for further action according to local policy/guidance. This may include proceedings to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- d. Recognition
 - 1. A consistent set of recognitions of success is an integral part of the school's aim to improve attendance for students, groups and overall attendance. Initiatives may include:
 - display of attendance percentages
 - linking attendance to academic progress and success
 - attendance as a regular feature of assemblies
 - verbal praise

4. Monitoring And Evaluation

- a. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for overseeing and reviewing the school's attendance procedures, improvement priorities and training.
- b. The Attendance Officer manages the day-to-day oversight of attendance.
- c. Regular line management meetings with relevant staff members ensures effective communication and consistent monitoring of attendance and punctuality.
- d. Pastoral teams monitor attendance of cohorts, sub-cohorts and individuals.
- e. The governing body is regularly informed of attendance rates, concerns, successes and plans to improve attendance.

5. This policy runs in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Student Extended Medical Absence Policy

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Appendix 1 – Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

The policy also takes into account the following Department for Education guidance:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136965/Summary_of_responsibilities_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance.pdf
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1134196/Support_for_pupils_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance_effective_practice_examples.pdf