



WILLOW TREE

Academy

Rockingham Junior and Infant School



THE LEAF CENTRE



Attendance Policy

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ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE and LA Guidance.

Reference to Parent/Carer throughout this document also includes any person who has parental responsibility or who cares for children.

Reference to school throughout this document is Rockingham School.

Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- The school is committed to maximising the achievement and attainment of all pupils.
- There is a clear link between good attendance, educational achievement and social inclusion.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the school.
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to work together with school to encourage pupils excellent and consistent attendance.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- All pupils reach an attendance of at least 96% in any academic year.

Statement of Expectations

What the school expects of the pupils:

- To attend regularly.
- All pupils are expected to reach attendance of 96% in any academic year.
- To arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day.
- Children should be arriving on the playground from 8.40am ready for the whistle at 8.45am. The register is taken at:
 - REY- 8.30am-11.30am 12.30pm-3.30pm
 - FS1- 8.45am-11.45am 12.15pm-3.15pm
 - FS2-8.55am-2:50pm
 - KS1-8.45am-3.00pm
 - KS2-8.55am-3.05pm
- Children should arrive no later than this time.
- If a pupil (FS2, KS1, KS2) arrives late they must enter school via the children's entrances if it is before 9.00a.m and through reception if it is later.
- If a pupil arrives late they must enter school via the children's entrance if it is before 8.55a.m and through reception if it is later.

What the school expects of the parents/carers:

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school on time every day.
- To inform the school by telephone of any reason that may prevent their children from attending. All information can be shared in confidence before 9.10am.
- To ensure that they contact the school before 9.10a.m each day of a child's absence should they be unable to attend school. A valid reason must be shared.
- Children should return to school after illness as soon as they are able.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day. This includes being in the correct uniform.
- To provide school with evidence of any forthcoming appointments and, wherever possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.
- To collect their child from the playground at 3.05pm for Years 3 & 4. In Years 5 & 6 children are allowed to come to and from school independently - permission must have been received for this.

If a pupil leaves the school premises for any reason during the school day, staff will ensure that this is recorded to comply with Health & Safety Regulations. Children will only be allowed out of school in exceptional circumstances and must be collected by an appropriate adult from school reception. If they have an appointment we will need to see an appointment card or letter.

Holiday Requests (Leave of Absence requests):

Section 7 of the Education Act states that: Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential in order for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Rotherham Early Help Team in partnership with schools will continue to investigate cases of regular absence from school and, following appropriate casework intervention, will instigate legal action if applicable, in line with amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 with effect from 1st September 2013

To ensure the continuity of all children's education, family holidays should be taken during school holiday periods.

All requests for family holidays during term time will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents/carers who choose to take their child out of school for a holiday must complete a Leave of Absence form prior to the absence. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where the period of unauthorised leave exceeds five school days, the school may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). If issued, the FPN will cover the entire holiday period.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued:

- First FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days
- Second FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days
- Third occasion in a 3-year period: A FPN will not be issued, and the Council will consider alternative enforcement.

The Local Authority will consider requests to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised holidays in term time at the Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice Panel.

The Fixed Penalty Notice Panel will require supporting documentation and relevant information including all correspondence with the parent as consideration needs to be given to whether there are any mitigating circumstances.

The supportive documents required are:-

- An attendance certificate showing the unauthorised holiday code (G)
- An attendance certificate showing the percentage attendance for the previous 3 terms
- The application made by the parent(s) requesting leave of absence in term time
- The school's response to the application for leave of absence detailing the reason(s) for refusal and all associated correspondence
- Provided the referral has met all criteria the Local Authority will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice by post

No parent can demand a leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday by right.

In addition to fixed penalty notice for holidays taken in term time schools can also request a fixed penalty notice for non school attendance should a child be absent for 10 sessions (equating to 5 full days) over a 10 week period where the absence is unauthorised. This is deemed to be Persistent Absence and negatively impact on a child's learning.

Once a child's absence falls below 95% absences will no longer be authorised. Individual circumstances will always be taken into account. Should this happen you will be contacted by school to discuss this, the outcome of which may be an attendance contract.

What Parents and pupils/students can expect of the school:

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- The encouragement and promotion of excellent attendance.
- Efficient and accurate recordings of attendance and punctuality.
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school. This is generally via telephone but an email may be sent if contact cannot be made by phone, however, responsibility lies with parents to inform school of any absence.
- If parents have not contacted school and school have made a call with no response then staff may visit the home for a welfare check.
- Any barriers to attendance will be explored and a support plan will be agreed to improve attendance
- Where attendance is a concern, school will offer an Early Help referral to assist and support families where needed.
- Parents will be notified at an early stage of any concerns around attendance. This will be by preferably by phone however may be via email or letter if contact can not be made.
- Where attendance does not improve, parents will be invited to a discussion to explore ways forward. An attendance contract may be agreed where necessary.
- Attendance of below 90% is classed as persistent absence.

Understanding Different Types of Absence

Only school can decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always requested to ensure that attendance is correctly categorised.

If your child has a sniffle or slight cough please ask yourself "Do they really need to be at home?" If they are unwell during the day we will call you.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an acceptable reason, for example: specified illness and/or medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in the school day.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider to be reasonable. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily in the view of the school.
- Absence that has not been properly explained/evidenced.
- Pupils/students who arrive in school too late to receive their mark after 9:30am.
- Shopping, looking after other children, birthdays or celebration events.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

Emotional Based School Avoidance

Whilst most pupils will be away from school because of illness, some individuals can be reluctant to attend. Any such problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school and the family. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we encourage the family to work with all involved to understand the root of the problem. When necessary we will engage the support of other agencies such as the School Nurse and Early Help Team.

Each school day counts for two sessions (am/pm) of attendance or absence. If your child is absent for 16 sessions (8 days) in an academic year they will not reach their target of 96%.

Attendance of less than 90% is called Persistent Absence and this has to be reported to the Local Authority throughout the year. Attendance at this level can lead to legal proceedings

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

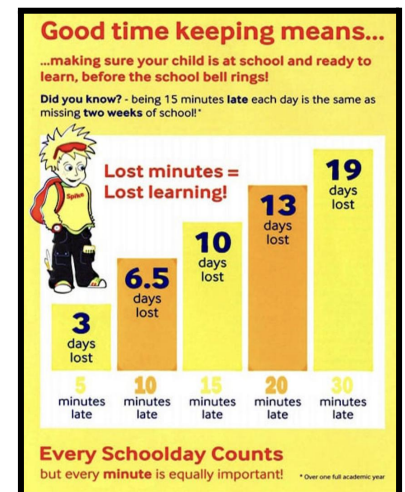
Registration Procedure

- The school day begins from 8.30a.m on the playground. The children come into school at their allotted times supervised by a member of staff and the pupils walk into school in a sensible manner.
- Registers are taken electronically in class by the teacher or teaching assistant and again immediately after lunch.
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- A mark is added for every pupil who is present. Children who are not yet in the classroom should be recorded with N unless the adult completing the register knows the reason for the absence and can record the appropriate code. The attendance team will compile a report detailing all children marked with an N before 9.15a.m and will then proceed to investigate their absence.
- If a pupil arrives after the children have entered school but before 8.55a.m, they should proceed to the class and get their mark and give their meal choice.
- If a pupil arrives after 8.55a.m they should enter school through reception. The receptionist will record their arrival and meal choice.
- Pupils/students arriving between 8.55a.m. and 9.30 a.m will receive a late mark.
- The morning register closes at 9.30am after which time a late arrival is recorded as an unauthorised absence. If a medical appointment has been attended, a medical absence will be recorded providing an appointment card or letter detailing the appointment is seen.

Responding to Lateness

Punctuality is a life skill. Please work with us to help your child get the best possible start.

- A child entering the classroom late will be missing out on their own learning as well as disturbing the learning of others.
- Entering a classroom late draws attention and this can create anxiety regarding arriving at school which can lead to school refusal.
- In the case of persistent lateness, parents will be contacted by the school's attendance team to plan how we can work together to ensure good punctuality.



Response to Attendance Issues

- The school will monitor all pupils' attendance. The school's attendance team will contact parents where there are concerns regarding attendance.
- If school feels that absence may not be genuine, absence will not be authorised without confirmation.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage if their child's % attendance is falling and support will be offered, this will be either with staff in school or/and with the Early Help Team.
- After long periods of absence it may be decided, in consultation with parents and/or agencies, that a gradual reintegration process should be followed.
- School follows the Local Authority SAMP Pathway (School attendance matters pathway). You may be referred to the Local Authority to be issued with a Fixed Penalty notice. This would always be a last resort as school would prefer to work with parent/carer and child to improve attendance.

Rewards for good attendance:

- Class attendance certificate weekly.
- Weekly 100% attendance celebration e.g. attendance wheel, raffle.
- Weekly 100% attendance Dojos issued (Special 5).
- Termly 100% attendance certificates and badges ranging from bronze for 1 term through silver for 2 terms and Gold for the whole year.

- Termly class attendance breakfast, including parent invite.
- Children with 100% attendance for all 4 years are recognised in their Y6 Leavers Assembly.
- Recognition for improving attendance.

