

# Roxbourne Primary School



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

<b>Author</b>	Safeguarding Lead
<b>Link Governor (if applicable)</b>	N/A
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### **1. Aims**

We are committed to the principle that all children have a right to be safeguarded and receive a suitable education. Part of the safeguarding role of the school is to promote good attendance and to monitor and support families whose attendance needs to improve. To this end we will take all appropriate steps to increase school attendance, punctuality and safeguard the welfare of children by working in partnership with parents, carers, pupils and other professionals / agencies.

We are fully committed to a policy of equal opportunities and will treat all partners fairly and with respect, being sensitive to race, religion, culture, sexuality, gender and disability and access issues. The purpose of this document is to set out procedures and systems used within Roxbourne Primary School to build and maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.

The current attendance target for schools in the borough of Harrow is 95%. We are committed to achieving the following target: 96%

### **Why regular attendance is so important**

**Learning:** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and also that of other pupils. This is because teachers need to help those children who have been absent catch up with work they have missed, which reduces the time available to give to the remaining children in the class.

We would like to remind parents that whenever your child misses school, this has a negative impact on your child's attendance figure and their learning. Learning at Roxbourne is carefully planned and sequenced, for example, missing one mathematics lesson has an impact on the next mathematics lesson and your child is likely to develop gaps in their knowledge when they miss school. Research shows that good attendance helps children to achieve good outcomes, helps them to fulfil their potential, develops good habits and gives them better life chances. There are many pupils in our school who achieve 100% attendance, we should all aim for the 100% mark too.

### **Safeguarding:**

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding

matter. Research shows that there is a strong link between low attendance and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).

### **Why attendance matters:**

- Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

Annual percentage	Equates to days off per week	Equates to days off per month	Equates to days off per half-term	Equates to days off per year
100%	0 days	0 days	0 days	0 days
96% (the minimum expectations)	0 days	0.5 days	1 days	7 days
90% (persistent absence which will trigger school / local authority intervention and a potential fine)	0.5	2 days	3 days	19 days
80%	1 days	4 days	6 days	38 days

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body:**

- It is the Governors' legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools.

- Attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.
- A designated Governor who has responsibility for monitoring attendance is the Safeguarding link governor.

#### **The Headteacher:**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

#### **The Attendance Officer:**

- Ensures that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level on a daily basis.
- Has appropriate registration processes in place.
- Follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- Informs parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher.
- Works with the Assistant Headteacher and the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence.
- Corresponds and meets with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- Liaises with the Local Authority when advice is needed.

#### **The Assistant Headteacher:**

- Works closely with the Attendance Officer.
- Meets parents to discuss support for persistence absence
- Makes referrals to the Local Authority for children who are deemed missing in education
- Co-ordinates and liaises with external agencies to support the children and their families

#### **Parent / Carer Responsibilities:**

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day.
- To inform school on every day of any absence before 08:50.
- To ensure that the school has up to date contact details and that the school has 2 emergency contact numbers for the child.
- To take no more than two school days for religious observance (as exclusively set apart by the religious body) within the same academic year.
- To ensure their child has no unauthorised absences.
- To request leave at least two weeks in advance unless this is an emergency.
- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's 'Leave Of Absence Form' via the Google form giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to reduce lateness and improve attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

#### **The role of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

The EWO strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness. Section 444 of the Education Act states that "if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence." Harrow Council, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

If there is unauthorised absence for 10 consecutive school days, or no contact from parents/carers after 10 school days, the school in liaison with the EWO will remove the child from school roll and allocate the place to a family in need of a school place. The child missing from education will be reported to Children's Services.

#### 4. Recording attendance and sanctions

##### Part 1: Sickness Absence

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent Authorised
- Absent Unauthorised

It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

	Morning Register	
Time	Nursery	Reception - Y6
08:28	Gates Open	
08:30	Pupils can enter setting	
08:40	Register Open	Pupils can enter setting
08:50	Gates Closed	Gates Closed Register Open
08:55	Register Closes	Register Closes
09:00	Registers analysed, parents who have not yet informed the school of child's absence are contacted.	
	Afternoon Register	
12:30	Register Opens	-
13:00	-	Register Opens

The register for the **morning register** will be taken at the following times:

- Nursery – from 08:40 until 08:55
- Reception to Year 6 – from 08:50 until 08:55

The register for the **afternoon register** will be taken at the following times:

- Nursery – from 12:30 until 12:40
- Reception to Year 6 – 13:00 until 13:10

**If your child is absent you must:**

Time	Parent Action
<b>Before 08:50</b>	Inform the school of your child's first day of absence and <b>every day of absence thereafter</b> . Please use the following methods to inform the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call: 0208 422 9207</li> </ul>

- Email: [office@roxbourneprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:office@roxbourneprimaryschool.co.uk)

If your child is absent, the school will:

Time	The school will
08:50	Analyse the registers
09:00	<b>If you have not informed us of your child's absence</b> , we will contact you via phone call or text to remind you to inform the school.
10:00	<b>If you have not informed us of your child's absence</b> , we will attempt to make contact for the second time, via telephone.
11:00	<b>If you have not informed us of your child's absence</b> , we will attempt to make contact for the third time via telephone. We will also make contact for all contact numbers we hold on your child's record.
12:00	<b>If you have not informed us of your child's absence</b> , we will visit your property.
13:00	<b>If we are unable to make contact and ensure you and your child are safe following the visit (for example, nobody answers the door)</b> , we will escalate the matter to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will then follow the school's safeguarding procedures. This can involve a referral to Children's Services or other agencies.

### Absence due to illness

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. In this case, the school may request medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

If your child is absent due to illness for **5 consecutive days or more, medical proof will be requested**. If your child is unwell for 3 or more consecutive days immediately **before** or **after** a school holiday medical proof will be requested. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

### Part 2: Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. It is important children learn and understand the importance of punctuality from an early age, it is a transferable life skill that will benefit them and ensure lifelong success.

Children must be in class on time each day. Children can enter their classroom from 08.40 to complete the first Do Now (activity) of the day.

A pupil who arrives late:

- **Before** the register has closed will be marked as **late**, using the appropriate code
- **After** the register has closed will be marked as **absent**, using the appropriate code. If your child arrives after 09:00 or 13:10, they will receive a present / late mark that shows them to be on site, however, this will appear as **unauthorised absence** for the morning / afternoon session.
- Lateness is considered to be equally as serious as absence as it disrupts learning for a child and the class. The process and procedures of monitoring attendance also apply for lateness.

### **Part 3: Special Leave of Absence**

The Department for Education states that parents can only allow their child to miss school if either:

1. they are too ill to attend school (this has been addressed in Part 1)
2. parents have received advance permission from the school (Part 3)

If you would like to request advance permission from the school (option 2), please complete the Special Leave of Absence Form.

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Please note that medical appointments or any non-urgent / specialist appointments should be made outside of school time, either after 15:25 or during the school holidays where possible.

**Special Leave of Absence form can be found on our school website, [here](#)**

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the Headteacher. Requests for exceptional leave must be made at least 2 weeks before the first day of intended absence.

#### **Special Leave of Absence: Holidays during term time**

Headteachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. We acknowledge that holidays are generally less expensive during term time, however, this is not a valid reason for a special leave of absence request.

#### **Special Leave of Absence: The importance of the first and last days of a period of learning**

Parents are also reminded that the last and first days of school are often the most important.

- During the first days of half-term, routines, structures and expectations are shared and practised and pupils often receive resources for the half-term ahead (such as knowledge organisers, texts, books, stationary).
- During the last days of a half-term, teachers work hard to bring the period of learning to a close by ensuring all work is complete, the transition to the next half-term or new year group is completed so that pupils start the new period of learning in the best possible place.

#### **Special Leave of Absence: Categories**

Valid reasons for authorised absence as referenced in the Special Leave of Absence Form are:

Reason for the special leave of absence request \*

Medical Appointment

Compassionate Leave

Religious Observance

Significant Personal/Family Event

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Part 4: Persistent Absenteeism**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the school year for any reason. Research shows that absence at this level can cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. We need parents' fullest support and cooperation to help tackle this. Persistent absentees may be required to provide additional evidence for absences. We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent absence mark or is at risk of moving toward that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored and we also combine this by monitoring their academic attainment and progress. Persistent absence from school is recognised as a potential safeguarding concern.

Persistent absenteeism may also be referred to the Court Attendance Officer or Children's Services. We will maintain a record of all absences and all interventions taking place to support the family including any Attendance Contract. This log will be used as evidence to ensure parents are complying with the school and local government policies.

#### **Education Penalty Notices**

The school can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks). This threshold includes any combination of unauthorised absence
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- Where the Harrow Council's Education Services believes that a Penalty Notice is the most appropriate way to deal with irregular school attendance as the child has attendance below 90% and at least 5% absences are unauthorised.

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority reserves the right to:

- issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence
- issue a Penalty Notice without warning

Where a parent fails in this responsibility and no improvement is brought about within the specified time frame, legal proceedings are initiated in the Magistrates Court.

**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:** Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, if a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

### **Notices to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## **5. Promoting good attendance at Roxbourne Primary**

At Roxbourne Primary we actively promote and regularly celebrate good attendance in the following ways:

- Each week we reward the class with the highest attendance in each year group with an **Attendance Award**. These are shared during our Achievement Assemblies.

- The class with the highest attendance at the end of each term in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will be given a non-uniform day to be taken during the following term and/or **additional play time**.
- Each term children who have achieved **100% attendance receive a special certificate**.
- **Award certificates** to individual children whose attendance or punctuality has **improved**.
- At the end of an academic year any child who has achieved **100% attendance will receive a trophy**.
- **Weekly Newsletter** sent to all parents includes our celebration of good attendance.

## 6. Attendance Monitoring

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

Where issues persist, the following will be initiated:

- **Stage 1:** Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will write to the parents/carers expressing our concerns.
- **Stage 2:** If the concerns persist, the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer and the Attendance Officer.
- **Stage 3:** If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer, the Assistant Headteacher and/or Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).
- **Stage 4:** If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to deal with the on-going issues. Please note that the Local Authority can take legal action.

At any point outlined in the process above, where the school feels there are safeguarding concerns, the matter will be dealt with following the school's Safeguarding Policy.

## Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

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

<u>Code</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Scenario</u>
<u>I</u>	<u>Present (am)</u>	<u>Pupil is present at morning registration</u>
<u>\</u>	<u>Present (pm)</u>	<u>Pupil is present at afternoon registration</u>
<u>L</u>	<u>Late arrival</u>	<u>Pupil arrives late before register has closed</u>
<b><u>Attending a place other than the school</u></b>		
<u>K</u>	<u>Attending education provision arranged by the local authority</u>	<u>Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority</u>
<u>V</u>	<u>Attending an educational visit or trip</u>	<u>Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school</u>
<u>P</u>	<u>Participating in a sporting activity</u>	<u>Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school</u>
<u>W</u>	<u>Attending work experience</u>	<u>Pupil is on an approved work experience placement</u>
<u>B</u>	<u>Attending any other approved educational activity</u>	<u>Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience</u>
<u>D</u>	<u>Dual registered</u>	<u>Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered</u>

**Absent – leave of absence**

<b><u>C1</u></b>	<u>Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad</u>	<u>Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school</u>
<b><u>M</u></b>	<u>Medical/dental appointment</u>	<u>Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment</u>
<b><u>J1</u></b>	<u>Interview</u>	<u>Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment</u>
<b><u>S</u></b>	<u>Study leave</u>	<u>Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination</u>
<b><u>X</u></b>	<u>Not required to be in school</u>	<u>Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend</u>
<b><u>C2</u></b>	<u>Part-time timetable</u>	<u>Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable</u>
<b><u>C</u></b>	<u>Exceptional circumstances</u>	<u>Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances</u>

**Absent – other authorised reasons**

<b><u>T</u></b>	<u>Parent travelling for occupational purposes</u>	<u>Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes</u>
<b><u>R</u></b>	<u>Religious observance</u>	<u>Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance</u>
<b><u>I</u></b>	<u>Illness (not medical or dental appointment)</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)</u>

<u>E</u>	<u>Suspended or excluded</u>	<u>Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made</u>
<b><u>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</u></b>		
<u>Q</u>	<u>Lack of access arrangements</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school</u>
<u>Y1</u>	<u>Transport not available</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available</u>
<u>Y2</u>	<u>Widespread disruption to travel</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency</u>
<u>Y3</u>	<u>Part of school premises closed</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open</u>
<u>Y4</u>	<u>Whole school site unexpectedly closed</u>	<u>Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)</u>
<u>Y5</u>	<u>Criminal justice detention</u>	<u>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>: In police detention</u></li> <li><u>: Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</u></li> <li><u>: Detained under a sentence of detention</u></li> </ul>

<u>Y6</u>	<u>Public health guidance or law</u>	<u>Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law</u>
<u>Y7</u>	<u>Any other unavoidable cause</u>	<u>To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes</u>
<b><u>Absent – unauthorised absence</u></b>		
<u>G</u>	<u>Holiday not granted by the school</u>	<u>Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school</u>
<u>N</u>	<u>Reason for absence not yet established</u>	<u>Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes</u>
<u>O</u>	<u>Absent in other or unknown circumstances</u>	<u>No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence</u>
<u>U</u>	<u>Arrived in school after registration closed</u>	<u>Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session</u>
<b><u>Administrative codes</u></b>		
<u>Z</u>	<u>Prospective pupil not on admission register</u>	<u>Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered</u>
<u>#</u>	<u>Planned whole-school closure</u>	<u>Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays</u>