

The Rise

Attendance Policy (September 2018)

1. Purpose and Scope

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
 Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
 Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
 Acting early to address patterns of absence

This policy covers the expectations and protocol for pupil attendance at school and the recording of data in the registers held on the school management information system (MIS).

Registers are an important record to be used in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building as well as being a legal requirement. It is essential that records are accurate in order that returns can be made by the school to the Department for Education (DfE) when required.

2. Legislation and guidance

The Rise School attendance policy complies with the Department for Education School Attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities¹, 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](#)

3. Who is involved in the process

- Class leader
- Parents/carers
- Headteacher
- Deputy Heads
- Assistant Heads
- School Office
- Data Manager
- Governors

The Process

Staff members are required to ensure that the procedures are followed at all times. Under the 1996 Education Act², parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority³ and an Education Penalty Notice⁴ being issued.

¹ Department for Education, School attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities October 2014 (Reference: DFE-00257-2013, www.education.gov.uk).

² Education Act 1996, HM Stationery Office
 (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/pdfs/ukpga_19960056_en.pdf)

³ Local Authority in which the child or young person is resident.

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Parents are required to notify school of a pupil's absence and the reasons for this by 10.00am when the registers close. The Class leader or, if directed, the School Office will follow the absence up if no notification has been received by this time.

The Class leader/School Office administrator will:

- Contact the parents/carers by telephone and/or by text message, or if the parent/carer is unobtainable
- Write a letter requesting information (a letter template is shown in Appendix A)

If the school is unable to obtain satisfactory information relating to the absence then the school will inform the Local Authority.

Each class has:

- A physical paper attendance register at reception used for emergency evacuations only.
- An electronic attendance register held on SIMS (The Rise School MIS), which is marked in compliance with statutory and school requirements.

3.1 Paper Registers

As a pupil arrives and departs the Rise School site, this should be recorded to ensure that the list is maintained of those pupils and staff who are physically onsite.

This record would be used in the event of an emergency evacuation by the Fire Marshals and the Incident Controller and to identify if all occupants had exited the building.

3.2 Electronic Registers

Registers are marked daily at the start of each session of school, i.e. both morning and afternoon, using the agreed codes/symbols for pupil absence.

The attendance data is reported to:

- The Department for Education via the Statutory Census returns
- The Local Authorities via annual and termly reports or when information is requested by the local authority or when a continued unauthorised absence occurs where a satisfactory explanation cannot be obtained.

Where absence levels fall below 95% additional protocols will be initiated see sections 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7.

School start time is 09.00 and registers close at 10.00. Pupils arriving after this time are 'late' and must be marked so in the register on SIMS accordingly.

Issues relating to journeys to and from school are followed up promptly.

The register should be marked as follows.

- A pupil present at the time of registration is marked in with ' / ' for the morning session and ' \ ' for the afternoon.
- When a pupil attends a long-term school educational journey (e.g. Scout Park) a pupil should be counted as present in the register. An Outside Educational Visit risk assessment form should be completed for the whole group and its staff before departure.
- Pupils, who attend another school for integration, or as a transition arrangement arranged by and with the Rise School staff, **must** be marked in the register. This is because they are registered on the roll of this school and thus are our responsibility. An outside educational visit form must be completed.

⁴ Education Penalty Notices are issued under the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, SI 1867/2007:

(http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20070925095208/opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/uksi_20071867_en_1)

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- If a pupil attends another school with their parents / guardians as a part of a transition process, the correct codes should be entered for an authorised absence (see 3.3 below).

3.3 Absence (authorised and unauthorised)

3.3.1 Authorised absence

Parents may not authorise absence, only schools can do this.

An **authorised absence** is one which has been authorised by the Headteacher or other authorised representative of the school.

Parents or carers should provide a written request for an absence to be authorised providing information about the reason for the request for absence. The request should be provided at least 2 academic weeks in advance of the date of absence.

The Parents should then await for the absence to be **authorised** by the Headteacher and to be advised in writing. The Headteacher will usually reply within 5 academic days of the request being received.

A record will be kept of the request and reply on the paper and or electronic record of the correspondence.

Government guidelines⁵ state that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The amendments to the 2006 regulations removed references to family holidays and extended leave.

3.3.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is absence without leave from the Headteacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences including all family holidays.

All absences are to be treated as unauthorised unless and until the school is provided with and agree on a satisfactory explanation.

3.4 Absence recording and codes

The code for the reason for **authorized or unauthorised absence** using the key below if the class leader has been able to ascertain the reason for absence.

B	Educated off site (not Dual registration)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
I	Illness (not medical or dental etc appointments)
L	Late (before registers close - morning session at 10.00 and afternoon session at 13.30)
M	Medical/dental appointments
O	Unauthorised absence
R	Religious observance
U	Late (after registers closed) after 10.00 or after 13.30
V	Educational visit or trip
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils
Y	Enforced closure

See Appendix B for more information on each code.

⁵ Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 amended in 2013, SI 756/2013 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/756/contents/made>)

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3.5 Absence Levels below 95%

Attendance levels are monitored by the School Leadership Team and the School Data Manager. Automatic alerts are available within SIMS.

If a pupils attendance falls below 95% **(GREEN STAGE)**

- A letter is set home raising concern as to the child's attendance dipping (see Appendix C - Attendance Awareness Letter 1)
- The Class leader will speak to the pupil on their return to school if the non attendance was due to their choice.
- The pupil's percentage attendance will be monitored for 4 weeks.

3.6 Absence Levels below 90%

If a pupils attendance falls below 90% **(AMBER STAGE)**

- A letter is sent home to the parents/carers and they will be invited in to the school to discuss their child's attendance with the Class leader/Key member of staff(see Appendix D - Attendance Awareness Letter 2)
- The Local Authority will be informed of the level of attendance.
- Targets will be set to improve the attendance and these will be confirmed in writing and agreed by Parent/Carer, School and Pupil (if appropriate) (see Appendix E - Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 1)
- Attendance will be monitored over a two week period.
- The school will warn the parents/carers that the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice,

3.7 Absence Levels below 85%

If a pupils attendance falls below 85% **(RED STAGE)**

- The parents/carers are invited in to the school to attend a meeting with the Local Authority present regarding their child's attendance (see Appendix E - Attendance Awareness Letter 3). The Class leader / key member of staff Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and/or Headteacher may attend the meeting as appropriate.
- An action plan will be set up and these will be confirmed in writing and agreed by Parent/Carer, School and Pupil (if appropriate) (see Appendix G - Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 2)
- A penalty notice will be discussed as directed by the Local Authority.
- Outside agencies may be involved.
- Attendance will be monitored over a four week period
- Further absences will only be authorised if evidence is provided.

Should the attendance level not improve then direction will be sought from the Local Authority as to how to proceed further.

The School reserves the right to request an Emergency Annual Review to determine, if it is appropriate that the pupil is to continue 'on roll', or be taken 'off roll' and the Local Authority to identify an alternative placement for the pupil.

The absence levels will be reported to the Governors in the Headteachers report

3.8 Absence from School (Medical)

Staff have a vital role to play in ensuring that pupils who are absent from school on medical grounds have the educational support they need. Therefore when pupils are absent from school staff make every effort to ensure that pupils are able to keep up with their school work, as far as their medical condition allows.

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We endeavor to:

- link parents with a named person responsible for dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school on medical grounds.
- notify the LA if a pupil is, or is likely to be, away from school on medical grounds for more than 15 working days, to ensure good liaison of all agencies working with the pupil.
- where relevant, supply the appropriate education provider (for example hospital school staff) with information about a pupil's capabilities, educational progress, and programmes of work.
- liaise with home and hospital services to enable them to draw up a personal education plan to cover the complete education for a pupil likely to be at home for more than 15 working days, and for pupils with chronic illnesses who regularly miss school. The Rise staff will work with appropriate health service staff.
- monitor progress and reintegration into school, liaising with other agencies as necessary.
- ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school on medical grounds and their families are kept informed about school social events and are able to participate in relevant activities.
- encourage and facilitate liaison with peers and / or staff, for example, through visits and videos.
- provide work packs in advance for pupils who are admitted to hospital on a regular basis.

School roll

- The Rise School will not remove a pupil who is unable to attend school on medical grounds from the school register without parental consent, even during a long period of illness.
- All changes to the 'named school' will be through the Annual Review process.

Successful reintegration into school

- Staff take a positive and proactive stance when welcoming the pupil back into school.
- Key staff will meet with the pupil and parents to discuss medical issues; the timing and pace of the return and any other areas of concern raised by the parents and/pupil.
- Extra support will be provided when it is clear what has been missed; diagnostic testing may be necessary to assess any gaps.

Partnership with parents and pupils

- Parents hold key information and knowledge about their child and therefore have a crucial part to play. The Rise School will always work in collaboration with parents to support children who have absence because of medical needs.
- Pupils will also be involved in making decisions and exercising choice.

5 Forms and Templates

- Outside Educational Visit risk assessment form
- Letter template to request reason for absence requesting information (Appendix A)
- Attendance Awareness Letter 1 (Appendix C)
- Attendance Awareness Letter 2 (Appendix D)
- Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 1 (Appendix E)
- Attendance Awareness Letter 3 (Appendix F)
- Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 2 (Appendix G)

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Appendix A – Letter template to request reason for absence requesting information

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Appendix B - Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

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Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their

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intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. All unauthorised codes must have a comment recorded on SIMS. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time (24 hours). it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

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Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

This will be reported to the Department of Education via the census and should be avoided.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent and the transport company as appropriate.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils

Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

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Appendix C - Attendance Awareness Letter 1

Appendix D - Attendance Awareness Letter 2

Appendix E - Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 1

Appendix F - Attendance Awareness Letter 3

Appendix G - Attendance Awareness Outcome Letter 2

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