



Attendance Policy

 ASPIRATION	Aspiration: Dream Big <i>If your dreams don't scare you, they aren't big enough!</i>
 RESILIENCE	Resilience: Be Determined <i>Resilience is a skill, not an ability. It can be learnt.</i>
 RESPECT	Respect: Communicate with Kindness <i>Manners cost nothing but mean everything.</i>
 INITIATIVE	Initiative: Solve Problems <i>Every problem is a gift – without problems we would not grow.</i>
 REFLECTIVE	Reflective: Never Stop Learning <i>Never stop learning because life never stops teaching.</i>

1.0 Background and the Importance of Regular School Attendance

Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life. Royds School is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Royds, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. It is crucial that students attend regularly, on time and every day that the school is open. Students should only be absent if it is completely unavoidable.

Royds School recognises that promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares students for the disciplines of adult working life.

Children who frequently miss school often fall behind. There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good results. For example, only 12% of pupils with below 80% school attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*- C including English and Maths, compared to 68% for pupils with attendance greater than 95%.

Good attendance at school shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Young people who are frequently absent from school are more likely to become involved in, or be a victim of crime and anti-social behaviour.

2.0 Expectations

2.1 Students

School expects the following from all students:

- That they will attend the school every day it is open unless genuinely ill.
- Achieve a minimum attendance of 95% and aiming for 100%.
- Inform form tutor, learning manager, head of year or any other member of staff of any problems that will effect attendance
- To attend regularly and on time
- To be punctual to all lessons

2.2 Parents and Carers

All children aged between 5 and 16 are required by law to receive an education and it is the duty of parents and carers to ensure that they are supported to do so.

We expect the following from parents/carers:

- To ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To be aware of legal responsibilities
- To ensure their child attends every day the school is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child away from school for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time. To make every effort to arrange dental and medical appointments out of the school day.
- To immediately inform the school if their child is unable to attend (by 8.25am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return

2.3 School

Royds School emphasises that it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to improve attendance and punctuality. The school needs to ensure that all its students access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential. We will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered. Royds will work with students and their families to ensure every student attends regularly and punctually. The school will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents / carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.

Royds School will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2003: 'Every Child Matters' by implementing this policy in a consistent manner. Royds School will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.

The school will:

- promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- work closely with parents/carers where student's absence is cause for concern.
- support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- support students returning to school after a prolonged period of absence

3.0 Legal Requirements

3.1 Admission and Attendance Register

The school is legally required to maintain an admissions and attendance register. They must contain:

- the personal details of every pupil in the school
- the date of admission or re-admission to the school
- information about parents and carers
- details of the last school attended

The school must use this to record a student's attendance at school from their agreed first day. The school also has a duty to establish the reason for any day a student fails to attend school.

Any amendment to the register must include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date and the details of the person making the alteration.

Registers must be retained for three years after an entry was made.

3.2 Contents of Attendance Register

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school must follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

3.3 Children at Risk of Missing Education and Home Educated Children

Schools must inform their Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority will be notified in advance of the deletion, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made.

The school works with the Local Authority to inform them of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten days or more.

On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school will inform the student's Local Authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register.

3.4 Term Time Holidays

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time.

Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are exceptional circumstances and holidays are not considered exceptional. Requests for leave must also be made to the school in advance as the Department for Education guidance prevents schools authorising absences retrospectively.

A penalty notice is a fine to parents or carers if they fail to ensure that their child / children attend school regularly. Leeds City Council is responsible for issuing penalty notices on behalf of schools in the city.

If a penalty notice is issued, it will be one fine to cover the whole period of the absence. So the fine would be the same amount for an absence of five days or ten sessions.

Penalty fines are £60 per child per parent (i.e. £120 for two parents) if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the fine is not paid, parents will be reported for prosecution.

4.0 Illness

Parents are advised that:

- if a child feels ill in the morning please provide them with appropriate medication and send them to school. Any medication should be handed in to the Medical Assistant who will administer it at appropriate times. Children should attend school if they have a minor illness such as a headache, cold, sore throat or period pains.
- if a child is ill and they are unable to attend school (e.g. they cannot get out of bed), please ring the school to notify the Attendance Office of their absence. Children should return to school as soon as possible.
- If a child is absent from school for five days or longer they are required to provide a medical note.

5.0 Responding to Non-Attendance

When a student does not attend, the school will respond in the following manner:

Attendance Tracking

Stage 1: Daily Monitoring	<p>Parents/carers are expected to call every day that their child is absent from school:</p> <p>a) Absence confirmed in a morning – an afternoon phone call will be made to check on well-being when possible.</p> <p>b) No phone call to inform of absence or inappropriate reason – phone call or home visit made. Attendance will be immediately unauthorised if no suitable reason is provided.</p> <p>c) Mini-bus active from 7.45 – the Attendance Lead will communicate daily pick-ups with the attendance team.</p> <p>d) Any holidays of 5 days or more will result in an immediate letter and £60 fine.</p>
Stage 2: Day 2 + Monitoring	<p>a) A second successive day of absence will result in either a phone call or home visit dependent upon circumstances. The cycle will continue until the student returns to school. Parents will be informed if absence is authorised or unauthorised and this will be recorded on the Attendance Communication Tracker.</p> <p>b) Holidays not declared will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Home visits will be made in the interests of safeguarding. Please remember that 10 unauthorised absences (5 days), in 12 weeks will trigger a Fast Track and potential Penalty Notice and £60 fine.</p> <p>c) Any student absent for more than 3 consecutive days will have a return to school interview with the Attendance Team on their return (parents are welcome to attend). Attendance will be discussed, and a registration certificate issued.</p>
Stage 3: Weekly Monitoring	<p>A weekly attendance report will be generated and sent to form tutors:</p> <p>a) Weekly stickers will be placed in planners</p> <p>b) Students will be informed of their cumulative attendance, which will be written in planners.</p>
Stage 4: Fortnightly Monitoring	<p>The school's fortnightly tracker monitors the 10 day trend of all students:</p> <p>a) During the 1st half term where there are absences of more than 2 days (4 Sessions) the respective Pastoral Lead will contact home. Thereafter if the cumulative attendance drops below 95%, the respective Pastoral Lead will contact home. This is because a child's attainment, progress and general well-being is at risk by not attending school. We need to work together to ensure attendance doesn't drop any lower.</p>
Stage 5: Fast Track Intervention	<p>If a student has 10 or more unauthorised absences (5 days) within a 12 week period, a Fast Track will be initiated:</p> <p>a) A letter and attendance certificate will be sent informing parents no more absence will be authorised, and a 20 days intense monitoring will take place – this is Fast Track Phase 1.</p> <p>b) If further absence occurs, unless exceptional circumstances, attendance will be unauthorised, and parents/carers will be invited to an SAP (School Attendance Panel) meeting with Pastoral Leads and/or the Leadership Team – this is Fast Track Phase 2.</p> <p>c) SAP meeting held and minuted and a Penalty Notice Warning issued to parent/carer. If further absence takes place within a 20 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued - this is Fast Track Phase 3.</p>
Stage 6 Local Authority Intervention	<p>Under the provision of Section 444 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. The government has introduced powers for the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases where parents/carers do not ensure their child attends regularly, which is currently £60, increasing to £120 if not paid within 21 days.</p> <p>a) If cumulative attendance drops following Fast Track Intervention, then a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued resulting in prosecution.</p> <p>b) Subsequent attendance will be tracked by the local authority.</p>

6.0 Authorised / Unauthorised Absence.

It is at the discretion of the Headteacher as to whether an absence will be authorised or not. The school may request medical information before deciding whether an absence will be authorised or not.

7.0 Punctuality

A student is late to school when they arrive after the first lesson has started, currently 8.30. Any student who arrives late to school will receive an after-school detention.

8.0 Reintegration

Long term absentees will be treated on an individual basis and therefore a special programme will be created to the individual's needs and requirements. This may involve phased part-time re-entry with support in lessons provided by ACE / the Bridge / Pastoral Leader / Learning Manager / Assistant Headteacher as deemed appropriate. This is often a challenging process and although success at first may be limited and slow, it must be accepted that we must persevere in creating a supportive environment.

9.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The whole school community has a vested interest in ensuring regular school attendance. Regular attendance is a partnership between student, parent / carer and the school.

9.1 Attendance Leadership

Attendance Leadership is currently delivered by the Headteacher, taking strategic responsibility for leading the development of attendance in the school.

9.2 Attendance Team

The day to day responsibility for administering attendance systems currently lies with Attendance Team.

They will:

- Operate the text message system on daily basis for first-day contact.
- Produce monitoring reports
- Send Persistent Absentee returns to the appropriate agency
- Check and amend post-register absence list.
- Issue attendance data to the Headteacher on a weekly basis and comparative data every half term.
- Monitor and log the attendance of vulnerable students including Looked After Children, those subject to a Child Protection plan and any other student identified by Headteacher, SENCO or Pastoral Leaders as per school safeguarding procedures.
- Produce regular data on attendance for Pastoral Teams or other key staff.
- Participate in fortnightly meetings with the all Pastoral Leaders to analyse the data together and communicate and share information.
- Input paper registers when they are used.
- Highlight missing marks and unexplained absences for previous weeks and follow up the reasons for these
- Liaise with parents, students, form tutors to ensure attendance is accurate
- Ensures all registers are completed and resolves any queries
- Supports the Headteacher in developing strategies to raise attendance.
- Provide general clerical and administrative support.
- Make contact with the student and parent at the early intervention stage
- Carry out home visits
- Liaise with the appropriate school staff to address any school-based issues which may be affecting a student's attendance
- Organise Wellbeing Panels
- Refer to pastoral staff to initiate Early Help, when appropriate

- Liaise with agencies such as Family Support or the Cluster to arrange agency provision as appropriate

The Pastoral Leader will:

- Manage group tutor teams in raising levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Raise profile of good attendance through assemblies, most improved group tutor award and the use of other rewards.
- Be responsible for the promotion of attendance within the year group
- Monitor trends in non-attendance and take appropriate action
- Display year group attendance targets and other promotional materials on year notice boards.
- Celebrate good attendance in assemblies.
- Monitor individual students and deal with truancy promptly and appropriately
- Manage, analyse and review data, weekly, half-termly and annually. Findings should be communicated to Attendance Leader regularly and formally, as part of a year group analysis after each reporting period.
- Attend fortnightly meeting to discuss year group attendance with the Attendance Office.
- Complete cluster referrals for the cluster meetings.

9.5 Form Tutor

The form tutor will:

- Challenge students in all areas of attendance, punctuality and truancy.
- Ensure procedures for registration are followed.
- Account for absences and truancy in the tutor group.
- Ensure school attendance targets are met and issue attendance reports.
- Send letters home praising students for excellent / improved attendance.

9.6 Subject Teacher

The subject teacher will:

- Challenge students in all areas of attendance, punctuality and truancy
- Ensure procedures for registration are followed
- Meet and greet students at start of lesson
- Provide starter to engage students

9.7 Leeds City Council Attendance Improvement Officer

The Attendance Improvement Officer will:

- Attend Cluster panel meetings
- Adopt a collaborative approach to addressing school attendance issues.
- Carry a caseload of students at Stage 3 and support them appropriately.
- Update the school as to results from Attendance Advisory Panels and Court case updates.
- Liaise with other agencies in order to improve attendance of students below 85%.

10.0 Children at Risk of Missing Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life. The school has safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of our students and as part of this must investigate any unexplained absences.

10.1 Responsibilities

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving efficient full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so, unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order. Where a parent notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school will delete the child from its admission register and then inform the local authority.

The school must monitor students' attendance through their daily register. The school follows Leeds City Council's procedures to pass on the details of students who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. The school also notifies Leeds City Council if a student is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances.

Students who remain on a school roll are not necessarily missing education but the school will monitor their attendance and address it when it is poor. Such attendance will normally be referred to Leeds City Council. They will investigate such absences on a case by case basis.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

10.2 Deleting Students from the Admission Register

The school must inform the Local Authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children)
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be notified in advance of the deletion, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made.

10.3 Local Procedures

The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. A child must not be removed from a school roll without written authorisation from an Attendance Improvement Officer or a member of the Children Missing Education Team.

Schools should make a CME referral as soon as possible but no later than when the child has been missing from school for 20 days and/or in the following circumstances:

- A child has left the country regardless of if a new address and/or new school information has been provided
- A child is rumoured to have moved out of the area
- A child has moved to a different Local Authority and is not on the roll of a new school within 20 days of leaving your school

Before referring a child, the school will carry out initial investigations by:

- Completing Home Visits

- Telephoning families
- Speaking to school friends and/or their parents
- Requesting copies of flight information
- Asking for the address the family is moving to
- Checking which school a child is expected to attend

11.0 Elective Home Educated Children

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school. Parents may decide to exercise their right to home educate their child from a very early age and so the child may not have been previously enrolled at school. They may also elect to home educate at any other stage up to the end of compulsory school age. Parents are not required to register or seek approval from the local authority to educate their children at home.

Parents who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations. However, local authorities are encouraged to provide support where resources permit - see section 5. Parents must also ensure that their children receive suitable full-time education for as long as they are being educated at home.

On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school must inform the student's local authority that the student is to be deleted from the admission register. The school will not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the student or because the student has a poor attendance record.

Children whose parents elect to educate them at home are not registered at mainstream schools, special schools, independent schools, academies, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), colleges, children's homes with education facilities or education facilities provided by independent fostering agencies.

Children with special educational needs statements can be home educated. Where the statement sets out special educational provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. Where the statement names a school as the place where the child should receive his or her education but the parent chooses to home educate their child, the local authority must assure itself that the provision being made by the parent is suitable to the child's special educational needs. In such case the local authority must review the statement annually.



Royds