REDBROOK HAYES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Policy Responsibilities & Review

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Aim

The aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to attend school every day (190 days per year) and to be able to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential for pupils to maximise their chances of success. There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent educational progress and good school attendance (above 97%).

Key Personnel

- **Headteacher -**The Headteacher, **Mrs L Turner**, is the only person who can authorise leave in 'exceptional circumstances'
- **SLT Attendance Lead -** The SLT Attendance Lead is **Mrs V Edkins**
- **Attendance Officer -**The Attendance Officer is **Mrs L Hallows**
- **Education Welfare Officer (EWO) -** The school are supported with implementing this policy by the EWO provided by the Local Authority

Duties

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and guardians to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education. Parents/Guardians are responsible for their child's school attendance and punctuality. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's roll. In addition. Attendance registers are taken online using Arbor.

Principles

- Regular and full attendance at school is an essential part of being able to deliver the best education to pupils. Teaching and learning become increasingly difficult when attendance is poor and this impacts future educational and social progress of children.
- By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a proper full-time education. Parents have a legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act of 1996 to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis either by registering the child at school, or by making other arrangements which provide an effective education.
- Parents do not have the right to take children out of school for a family holiday
- Unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents can be reported to the Local Education Authority when there are persistent attendance problems
- Every absence from school must be classified by the school (see appendix A). It is the school that decides if an attendance is unauthorised.
- Problems with attendance are best resolved by discussion between the school, parents and the pupil.
- The school refer any issues of poor attendance, disengagement from parents or persistent absence to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) which may result in formal meetings and penalty notices being issued.

Responsibilities & Expectations

The school will ensure that:
• Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently each session.
• Attendance targets are set for individual pupils.
• Attendance and punctuality data are regularly reviewed and support is available for pupils with attendance below 90% or have a pattern of lateness.
• Parents are able to see their child's attendance/absence patterns via the Arbor app.

Pupils are expected to:
• Attend school regularly and be registered punctually

The Parents or Guardians will:
• Ensure good attendance (96% and above)
• Inform the school on each day of absence and give specific reason which will be recorded on Arbor
• Discuss planned absences with the school in advance and seek the appropriate leave of absence in good time.

School Day:
• The school day for pupils begins at 8.50am — by this time all pupils should be on the school's premises.
• Pupils entering the school through the school office once the gates have closed at 8.55am will be marked as late for
school.
• Pupils entering school once the registers are closed at 9.20am are marked as late after the registers have closed. This impacts their overall attendance.
• Afternoon registration takes place at 12.55pm
• The school day ends at 3.20pm

The Attendance Officer:
• Will liaise closely with class teachers in checking that registers are completed accurately and on time.
• Will ensure that the registers are available for scrutiny and for emergencies e.g. for fire drills
• Will ensure that all reasons for absence are recorded accurately on Arbor
• Is responsible for notifying the SLT Attendance Lead of attendance queries or problems
• Is responsible for passing on any leave of absence requests to the SLT Attendance Lead and Headteacher for consideration.
• Will collate and pass on any information needed to submit penalty notice charges.

The SLT Attendance Lead:

• Will attend regular Local Authority Attendance update events and disseminate any relevant information to class teachers, The Attendance Officer and Headteacher.

• Will regularly analyse whole school and individual data and input this into the school tracking system.

• Will make contact with parents where their child's attendance falls below 90% and track this child until their attendance is back above 96%

• Will invite parents of children with attendance under 80% in for a face to face meeting to discuss reasons for this and offer support moving forward.

• Will invite parents of with a school attendance of less than 90% in the last academic year whose attendance drops below 90% in the current school year in for a face to face meeting.

• Will ensure that class level attendance is regularly shared on the school newsletter.

• Will refer any instances of persistent absence or unauthorised leave of absence to the Local Authority for them to take action.

Monitoring attendance:

• The Attendance Officer will provide a daily list of absentees for SLT Attendance Lead

• The Attendance Officer has an agreed priority list of who to contact first in the instance of absence, agreed by the Headteacher, the Pastoral Support Team and SLT Attendance Lead. Families of these pupils will be contacted as early as possible on the first day of absence.

• SLT Attendance Lead will feed information into the Pastoral Support Team Meeting regularly, highlighting issues regarding attendance and individual pupils with concerning attendance.

• Pupils will be rewarded for excellent attendance via the school's ePraise reward system. Once point will be given per full school week. Another will be given for good punctuality all week.

• The Governing Board will receive regular updates on the attendance picture

Punctuality:

• All pupils are expected to be punctual to school (8.45am).

• Pupils arriving after the gates have closed at 8.55am will be marked as late using an L code

• Pupils arriving after registers close at 9.20am will be marked as an unauthorised absence and the absence must be explained by parental contact as it would be with any other absence. This will be coded as a U.

Attendance Procedures

• Parents are asked to telephone school before 9.15am at the latest to notify us of a child's absence and the reason for this so it can be recorded on Arbor.

• Pupils who are collected by parents during the school day will need to sign out on the Inventry system screen in the school office.

• Pupils arriving at school once the gate has been closed or after the registers have closed ensure that Mrs Hallows has seen them in the school office so they can be correctly marked as late (L) or late after the register has closed (U). Mrs Hallows will also be able to ensure that a school dinner is booked where necessary.
• Where parents fail to make contact providing a reason for absence, school will contact them via the Arbor app with a message asking for them to contact the school with a reason for the absence. Where this does not happen, Mrs Hallows will try to contact the parent, although this should not have to happen. Where contact is unable to be made, this absence will be marked at unauthorised (U).
• Where a child's attendance or punctuality over time is a cause for concern, or when a parent fails to notify the school of the reason for an absence, the school will contact the EWO to further investigate. This may mean a home visit from either school staff or the EWO.

Unauthorised Absences

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

• School has not given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent

• School does not accept a given explanation as satisfactory justification for absence

• Medical evidence requested by school is not forthcoming

• No explanation of absence is received within 3 school days of the absence. Marks cannot be changed after 3 days of the absence.

• If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether that absence is authorised or unauthorised. Parents may not authorise any absence. In cases where parents seem to condone unauthorised absence, school will involve the Local Authority EWO.

• The Governing Body have adopted the Government initiative of imposing penalty notices in cases of persistent unauthorised absence, unauthorised holiday requests and persistent lateness to registration

Leave of Absence

• Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.
• Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset against the cost to your child's education.
• Applications for leave of absence should be requested before any expenses are committed. Costs already incurred are not considered when a leave for absence request is reviewed.
• There is no automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time.
• All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent. Booking a holiday by mistake in what are thought to be school holidays will not be authorised. Term dates for the next school year are always freely available on the school website, in the school office and on our school newsletter in advance of the year starting.
• Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence must complete the official request form. This can be collected from the school office. Completed forms should be returned to the school office at least 2 weeks before the proposed absence.
• Leave in term time will not be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional
• A request for a leave of absence involving a pupil missing 3 or more days of school will not be authorised without a formal discussion between a parent/guardian and the Headteacher, even if circumstances are exceptional.

In considering the request we will also look at various factors such as:
• The timing of the request
• When a pupil is just starting school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
• Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods e.g. SATs or any other public examinations
• Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year.
• A leave of absence will not be authorised retrospectively
• Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence is shown on reports and ultimately school references. In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Readmission cannot be guaranteed

• Where school suspects unauthorised holidays have been taken a home visit may take place.
• Any period of unauthorised absence or persistent late marks/absence can result in a fixed penalty notice if the Local Authority threshold is met.
• A fixed Penalty Notice can be issued for ten 'U' (10 later after the register has closed marks) or 'O' marks (equivalent to 5 full days) over a 10 week period. The school follows the Staffordshire Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing fixed penalty notices.
• The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013).

Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. This is a fine to a parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance/punctuality at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. This could include several episodes of unauthorised absence, persistent lateness after the register has closed or unauthorised holiday. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour, they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from September 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate. Penalty notices are issued to each parent:

- The **first penalty** notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at **£160 if paid within 28 days**. This will be reduced to **£80 if paid within 21 days**.
- A **second penalty** notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a **flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, **alternative action should be taken instead**. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Children Missing in Education

Schools have a duty by law to refer any absence of 20 days or more to Staffordshire Local Authority Children Missing in Education department where they have been unable to establish contact with the parent/pupil or have general concerns about the absence.

To avoid any referrals, parents are requested to inform the school if they are moving house/area or country and to provide a forwarding address, contact number and the name of the new school if known.

Medical Absence

Schools have the responsibility to decide whether an absence can be authorised on medical grounds. If the school has concerns about the level of medical absence that a pupil has incurred, they will contact the parents to discuss it further and to find out whether their GP or other health professional has been contacted.

Where a child has attendance below 90%, parents may be asked to provide evidence that their child is too unwell to attend school by providing a note from a medical professional or a copy of any prescribed medication. If the school do not receive medical evidence, the absences will be unauthorised.

Medical and Dental Appointments

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays whenever possible. If this is not possible, confirmation of the appointment will be required prior to authorising the absence and an M code used on the register to record when the child has attended the appointment.

Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents are expected to return their children to school following the appointment.

Elective Home Education

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child, school will contact the parent and discuss their reasons in more detail, offering support to deal with any issues raised. If after this time the parent still wishes to home educate their child, the school will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register.

Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record. Prior to deciding to home educate, parents are requested to contact Staffordshire Local Authority Elective Home Education department.

Appendix A

Registration Codes from 19/8/24			
Code	**Summary**	**Rational**	**Classification of code**
/	Present AM	The session is a morning session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	Attending
\	Present PM	The session is an afternoon session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	Attending
L	Late in registration time	The pupil is absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended.	Attending
K	Local Authority alternative provision	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the 1996 Act(12) or section 42(2) or 61(1) of the 2014 Act.	Attending an approved educational activity
V	Educational Visit	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the proprietor and supervised by a member of school staff.	Attending an approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity.	Attending an approved educational activity
W	Work Experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the proprietor as part of the pupil's education.	Attending an approved educational activity
B	School alternative provision	The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity within paragraph (11) of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024	Attending an approved educational activity
M	Medical Appointment	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.	Authorised absence
J1	Interview	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Study Leave	Authorised absence
X	Not required to attend	The pupil is not of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend	Not a possible attendance
D	Dual Registered	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending another school at which they are a registered pupil. Dual Registered.	Not a possible attendance
C	Exceptional circumstances	The pupil is absent with leave for any other purpose	Authorised absence
C1	Regulated performance	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Part-time timetable	The pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because, in accordance with an agreement between a parent who they normally live with and the proprietor that the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis, their timetable does not require them to attend.	Authorised absence
T	Traveller	The pupil is a mobile (i.e. Gypsy, Roma, Travelling) child, their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent.	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	The day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs.	Authorised absence
I	Sickness	The pupil is unable to attend because of sickness.	Authorised absence
Q	Local Authority failed to make access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements for them within paragraph (12) or (13). Local authority failed to make access arrangements.	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Normal Transport failed	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from school that is normally provided for the pupil by the proprietor or a local authority is not available.	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Travel disruption due to emergency	The pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Partial school closure	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those who the proprietor thinks cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Whole school closure	Whole school site unexpectedly closed.	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Child in custody	The pupil is unable to attend because they are in criminal justice detention.	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Public health guidance	Unable to attend in accordance with Public Health guidance or Law	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	The pupil is unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Not a possible attendance
E	Excluded or suspended	The pupil is excluded or suspended from the school for any other reason.	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday	The pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.	Unauthorised absence
N	Not yet known	The circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established.	Unauthorised absence
O	No reason or unsatisfactory reason	No reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes classified as authorised.	Unauthorised absence
U	Late after registration close	Arrived in school after the registration closed	Unauthorised absence
Z	Not on admission register	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Administration Code, not collected
#	Planned school closure	Planned whole school closure	Administration Code, not collected