

# ROXETH PRIMARY SCHOOL



## PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

*Revised September 2020*

### *OUR MISSION STATEMENT*

*Equality, Excellence, Education*

*To educate our children and their families to achieve their full potential*

**Roxeth Primary School**  
**PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Educating children, and ensuring they grow up to lead safe, happy, healthy and successful lives, is at the heart of what we do at Roxeth Primary School. We are committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### **Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50 am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes and will therefore close at 9.00 am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. unexpected traffic problems. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00 pm Infants & Juniors 1.15pm  
The registers will close at 1.10 pm Infants & Juniors 1.25 pm

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

There are two negative results caused by pupils who constantly arrive late. These are:

- The loss of education suffered by the pupils themselves which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school
- The disruption to other children in their class as the teacher's attention is taken from the task in hand

Parents will be informed when a pupil is persistently late by text message from the attendance officer then a letter from the Headteacher.

This can trigger the issuing of an Educational Penalty Notice fine by the Local Authority if no improvement is made.

Persistent lateness picking up at the end of the school day will be monitored half termly. Letters will be sent if a child meets a certain threshold of 20 minutes late on a regular basis. This may incur a charge by the school.

Afterschool club late picking up triggers a meeting with the Headteacher initially. A letter will be sent home and if it continues the child will be taken off the Afterschool Club.

### **First Day Absence**

We record the registers using the SIMS attendance module. First day contact is an integral part of the Whole School Attendance Policy. Parents and pupils must realise that a pupil's absence will be noted and acted upon swiftly. First Day contact sends a clear message to pupils and parents that attendance is very important.

For Roxeth Primary School's policy of first day contact to work efficiently:

- Parents should inform the school of the reason for an absence for the first morning a pupil is away. Parents will be kept well informed about what they should do regarding absence.
- The telephone absence line is the preferred method of contact.
- If the parent has not contacted the school by 9.40 am then the parents should usually expect to be contacted by staff in the school office or Welfare.
- This procedure needs to be fully understood by all staff and parents for it to work effectively.

First day contact works by:

- Raising awareness of the importance of full attendance
- Addressing problems before they grow
- Improving home-school links
- Sending a clear message to parents and pupils that if a child is absent they will be missed.
- Alerting parents who may be unaware that their child is truanting
- Requiring and promoting a high level of communication in the school, staff working as a team
- Reducing the number of pupils who have short term absence, thereby reducing the overall absence rate.
- Assisting parents and pupils to develop habits that reduce casual absence an encouraging early contact from parents.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence. A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. If there is any concern about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

If the above actions do not illicit an explanation for the absence, the Assistant Headteacher will contact the family.

After a maximum of 10 days' absence, unless other action is planned, parents will be invited into the school by the Assistant Headteacher. The parents/carers will be made aware of legal requirements regarding school attendance. Access to further support may be offered through the work of our Family Action Worker, Monika Nemeth. If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved at this meeting, then a formal referral will be made to Harrow Council's Children's Service Early Intervention Team for further action.

In order for this policy to be successful, every member of school staff will make attendance a priority and to convey to the pupils the importance of their attendance to their education. It is vital that staff act as an excellent example attending regularly, arriving on time for all lessons and being well prepared.

### **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

### **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Promoting attendance**

The school regularly monitors pupil attendance. The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has a pattern of absence. Currently we monitor the attendance closely of pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. Letters are sent out to parents of these children termly reminding them of the need to have good attendance. If a child has a repeated number of absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then put into place actions described above.

### **Penalty Notices**

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2017, pay £60 per parent per child, (up to 3 per academic year) to pay within 21 days or £120 if paid between 21 & 28 days per parent. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

## Term-time leave

From September 2013 amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removes reference to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days.

The amendments make it clear that the Headteacher **will not grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Evidence may be required.

In order to ensure we meet our legal responsibilities, we must make every effort to make it clear to parents and carers that children must attend school on a regular basis. Any time away from school can have an impact on educational attainment.

We must be able to evidence that we have done all we can to ensure the law is upheld. In law, parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure regular and punctual attendance at school. Therefore, any unauthorised absence, such as taking holiday in term time, can result in a Fixed Term Penalty Notice. Fixed Penalty Notices will operate following Harrow Council's guidance. The Penalty Notice will require the payment of a fine of £60.00 each parent per child within 21 days rising to £120.00 which must be paid within 28 days. Failure to pay a Fixed Term Penalty Notice may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrates Court for up to £1000.

**Our school will therefore no longer be able to authorise absence from learning (Leave Requests) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Permission for leave from school must be requested using the Leave Form available from the office.**

If applying for leave parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The Head teacher will consider the following before authorising any leave:

1. The child's previous attendance history.
2. The age of the child.
3. The child's stage of education.
4. The time of year - The headteacher will not authorise leave during Year 6
5. The nature of the trip – (*exceptional circumstances*).

Where the school and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Where the parents keep a child away for longer than agreed, the extra time will also be marked as unauthorised.

Leave of absence for more than two weeks **must** be seen as exceptional; parents must arrange to see the Headteacher prior to making their travel arrangements. Permission for such a visit will only be given once during their time at Roxeth. Where approval is given for such a holiday, for instance for travel to their homeland for exceptional reasons, the class teacher will prepare a study pack or set assignments for the pupil to complete while he or she is away.

## **Attendance Awards**

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- Class of the Week....'On time Tiger' 'Raring to Go Rabbit' (rewards for winning class)
- Early Bird Week
- All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an attendance pencil/award
- Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the summer term will receive a certificate

## **Attendance Targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the School Improvement Partner (SIP) as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets. Government DfES targets are set at 95%. Our school target is presently 96%. Monitoring interventions are triggered during half termly checks when attendance falls below 90%.

Policy agreed by the Governing Body: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018

To be reviewed: September 2020

## **APPENDIX 1 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

### **Term-time holiday**

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### **Deleting a pupil from the admission register**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 currently do not provide for a school to delete a pupil from the admission register where the pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age and has failed to meet the academic requirements for entry to their sixth-form. Amendments to the 2006 Regulations will allow this bringing the regulations into line with the new School Admissions Code 2012, which allows schools to set academic requirements for entry into sixth form.

## **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children’s regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

## APPENDIX 2-The registration system

The School uses the SIMS Attendance Module for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information. Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years and must be safely stored.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

## APPENDIX 3-The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school. September 2017 - Section 444 A of the Education Act 1996 empowers the Local Authority issuing multiple Education Penalty Notices to each parent per child (maximum 3 per year). Change of criteria in relation to "lateness" for the issuing of an EPN from 12 late marks in 20 weeks to **8 unauthorised late marks code ( U ) in 10 weeks.**

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

### Categorisation of Absence

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.**

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

#### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

#### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

#### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration