
ATTENDANCE POLICY



RÆDWALD
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ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Policy author:	Angela Ransby
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CEO Signature:	Angela Ransby
Trust Board Signature:	Roger Fern

Updates made:	Date:

1. Scope

This policy relates to all academies across the Raedwald Trust. It may be augmented by local procedures offered by individual settings, published on academy site web pages.

2. Introduction

The Raedwald Trust is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of attendance is essential. 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 including e.g. newsletters and end of term reports.

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).

Each year the Raedwald Trust will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Suffolk attendance targets.

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

3. Raedwald Trust Procedures

a) All children at the Raedwald Trust must have an attendance code at the morning or afternoon registration period. These codes should be recorded as present (/ \), if a student arrives late (L), authorised absence (B, D), illness (I), medical or dental appointment (M), unauthorised absence (O) or as an approved educational activity outside any published learning locality (V). Should students have an authorised leave of absence the (C) code will be used. In the event that academies feel they require an alternative statutory code than those listed above, agreement must be sought from the Trust business team.

b) Only the Head Teacher 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.

4. Lateness

a) Morning registration will take place at the academy site published times.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. transport was delayed.

b) In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered (M).

The afternoon registration will be at the site published times.

c) Pupils arriving after the start of Academy timetable but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers closed.

d) Parents/Carers must inform the Academy if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day. This must be followed up in writing to explain the reason for the absence. If no reason is given within 2 weeks the absence will become unauthorised.

e) When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

5. Absence from School

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact the office as soon as it's reasonably practical (e.g. by 9.00am) whenever their child is unable to attend.

If no information regarding the absence of a student has been received and the student is not present then a First Day Response phone call will be made to the parent to check the reason for absence. This call will be made by the students' key worker or administrator.

Third Day and Continuing Absence

If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the academy will use the contacts list provided by parents.

Where there has been no response, or explanation, the academy will continue to telephone and make a home visit if appropriate.

Where there continues to be no response to the academy intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the academy will refer the issue to the County Attendance Team.

If there are safeguarding issues the academy may report the student as a missing person (MISPER).

If a student's attendance slips below 90%, the academy will initially write to parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the academy leader will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if appropriate.

If a student is repeatedly late, the academy will initially write to parents expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the academy leader will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if

appropriate.

In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between the academy and parents, with the support of the County Attendance Team, the College will refer the matter formally to the County Attendance Team and, where necessary, legal proceedings will be instigated.

Ten Day Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to Suffolk County Council. The academy will include details of the action they have taken.

When a child or young person stops attending school for 10 days, or where there are safeguarding concerns, and no contact can be made to establish the child or young person's whereabouts school will complete a (CME) 'Child Missing Education' and submit this to the Local Authority. Prior to this point, the academy will take the necessary actions to assure themselves that a child is safe and secure if they have not attended school, and this may involve referring to children's social care.

6. Absence Notes

Absence 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.

7. Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Head of School and Head Teacher to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the academy will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the academy will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

8. Penalty Notices and Legal Action

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory college age shall cause him to receive efficient fulltime education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at college 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 college age and are registered at college 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. In cases of persistent absenteeism, the academy reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a referral to The County Attendance Team to issue a fine or take further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the County Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the academy's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for school after registration is closed.

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The Raedwald Trust monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the college and a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and college to try and help resolve any issues. PA cases may be referred to the County Attendance Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

9. 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 other pupils.

10. Leave of Absence

The Head Teacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/Carers should seek permission from the Head Teacher prior to the leave of absence period in question.

The Head Teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Parents/carers who remove their children from school without authorisation or do not return their child to school on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution (see Penalty Notices and Legal Action above).

11. Register and Admission Roll Keeping

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the college at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories:

- [1] Unauthorised Absence (*including unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances*);
- [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 a 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 academy. This would include:

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

APPENDIX 1: COVID-19 ATTENDANCE REPORTING

In line with government guidance from Tuesday 1st September 2020 the following codes will be used to record attendance across all Raedwald Trust sites on School Pod.

For the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. See this addendum for further information, including advice on the application of code X.

ATTENDANCE RECORDING	ATTENDANCE CODE
PRESENT: Attending AM session	/
PRESENT: Attending PM session	\
PRESENT: Attending Dual Registered setting	D
ATTENDING a Medical or Dental appointment	M
ATTENDING a host school or OFFSITE educational activity with or without Raedwald Trust staff member.	B
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.	L
ABSENT: Where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness – NOT medical or dental appointment).	I
ABSENT: 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.	C
ABSENT: 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.	E
ABSENT: 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	H

is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.	
ABSENT: 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.	J
ABSENT: 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.	P
ABSENT: 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.	V
ABSENT: 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 12 placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code	W
ABSENT: 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.	R
ABSENT: 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.	S
ABSENT: 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.	T
ABSENT: 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.	G
ABSENT: 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 it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).	N
ABSENT: Absent from school without authorisation If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.	O
ABSENT: 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.	U
<p>ABSENT: Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) (This code is not counted as an absence in the school census) This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care¹² or • any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) <p>Schools should also continue to use code X to record when a pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend as detailed below.</p>	X
<p>Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: 	Y

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	
<p>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.</p>	Z
<p>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.</p>	#