
ATTENDANCE POLICY



RÆDWALD
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RATIFIED BY THE TRUST BOARD:
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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:	Alan Whittaker

Updates made:	Date:
Appendix 1 updated	6 th September 2023

1. Scope

This policy relates to all academies across the Raedwald Trust.

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 Trust 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 a strategy aligned with driving improvements.

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 and 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 using one of the attendance codes found in appendix 1 of this policy.

b) Only the CEO can authorise all absence codes **other than** I, D, M.

4. Lateness

Morning and afternoon registration will take place at the academy site published times.

a) 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 a medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered (M).

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

d) Parents/Carers must inform the academy if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day.

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.

5. Absence from School

Safeguarding and the welfare of our pupils is the top priority of the Raedwald Trust. To this end, we will ensure that contact is made with all of our pupils on a daily basis (directly or via their parents/carers or mainstream schools).

Parents/carers are expected to contact the office as soon as it's reasonably practical 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 at their expected arrival time, then a phone call will be made promptly to the parent/carer to check the reason for absence. If contact via phone call is not successful, the school will follow up via other methods e.g. sending text message to parent/carer or contacting the other emergency contacts as listed for the student. In cases where the student's personal mobile number is held on file, attempts will also be made to contact them directly.

If contact with pupil is successful, the academy will continue to try contact parents/carers to ensure they are aware that the student is not in school.

If contact with parents/carers is made who confirm the student is unwell, the academy will still contact the parent/carer on a daily basis, to check on the wellbeing of the student.

The academy will ensure that all contact (successful or otherwise) is recorded on the academy MIS.

Where there has been no response, or explanation, the Head Teacher will ensure nominated staff continue to ascertain the whereabouts of the student. If all methods of contact have been unsuccessful a further conversation will take place with the academy's safeguarding team who will determine next steps which will likely include an attempted 'eyes on' visit that day. If contact with parents/carers and/or pupils continues to be unsuccessful the Head Teacher will ensure that concerns are passed onto the relevant professionals (if in place such as social care) and mainstream school (if relevant).

They will also consider whether a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) is completed. Academies should liaise with the Trust Safeguarding & Compliance Lead to inform of concern and actions being taken.

If a student's attendance slips below 90%, the academy may initially arrange a meeting with the parents/carers, mainstream schools and other professionals (as appropriate) expressing concerns about levels of attendance, offering support and creating a plan to improve attendance.

6. Absence Notes

If an absence note is received from parents/carers explaining absence, this should be uploaded to the academy's MIS.

7. Frequent Absence

When a child or young person has persistent absence, they will be raised directly with Suffolk County Council to seek further advice about wider support that may be needed through the mainstream school

to support attendance. In some cases, this may result in a change to pathway support or termination of placement whilst mainstream attendance policies are implemented.

Pupils are persistent absentees if they miss 10% of sessions or more and severe absentees if they miss 50%. If a pupil's overall absence rate is 10% or higher of their possible sessions, they're classified as persistent absentees. A 'session' is one morning or afternoon in school.

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

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

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 fulltime 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. In cases of persistent absenteeism, the academy reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine.

A Parent/Carer may 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/carers will be informed of this immediately.

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

The Head Teacher will seek approval from the CEO and 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.

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 school at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories:

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 could include:

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

APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE REPORTING

In line with government guidance from 1st September 2023 the following codes will be used to record attendance across all Raedwald Trust sites on School Pod.

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 without Raedwald Trust staff member.	B
LATE ARRIVAL	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). Only 3 days for Covid illness will be authorised.	I
ABSENT: Leave of absence authorised by the CEO. 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. This code should be used for part time timetables / induction timetables and for pupils on Haven pathway when they are not due RT sessions. Any C code for use other than part time timetables or Haven pupils must only be used with approval from the CEO.	C
ABSENT: Excluded	E
ABSENT: Holiday authorised by the CEO should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the CEO 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 CEO will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the CEO's discretion.	H
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: Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. 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. This code must only be used with approval from the CEO.	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 CEO. 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: Not required to be in school This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.	X
Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because: <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 	Y

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