



Rauceby School Attendance Policy

Introduction

Parents or carers of children of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996). If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly their parent commits an offence.

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995, the school must keep an attendance register.

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Aim

Rauceby School is a caring school which always has the best interests of its children at the heart of everything it does. In order for our children to gain maximum benefit from their time with us, a high level of attendance and arriving in time for the start of the school day is vital. Whilst we appreciate that occasionally absences are unavoidable, we aim to discourage absence where possible. The school will work with parents and children to secure this aim. This policy will ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that children who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school.

Taking the register

Children of compulsory school age and those children who are not compulsory school age but are in full time education must have their attendance registered twice per day.

The register must be updated twice daily at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The register must record the following:

1. Whether a child is present or absent.
2. When a child of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an authorised or unauthorised absence.
3. The nature of the absence.

- The school day begins at 8.55am and the afternoon session begins at 1.00pm.
- Arrival after 8.55am will constitute a late code “L”.
- All class registers will be closed at 9.05am.
- Any child arriving after the register has closed ie after 9.05am, will be marked as an unauthorised late “U”.
- Children arriving late, **for whatever reason**, will always be marked as such. This also includes lateness due to transport issues.
- Children who are persistently late even within the first 5 minutes of the session starting, may lose their right to be coded as late and could instead be marked as “unauthorised” late. The Headteacher will notify the parent of this decision in writing.
- Any child arriving at school after 8.55am must enter school through the school office and they will be marked as late by the school office staff.
- A signing in/out book will be used for children arriving/leaving the school during the day for medical appointments etc.

Inspection

School admission and attendance registers must be available for inspection by HMIs and registered inspectors.

Responsibilities

The **Governing Body** will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Headteacher; and
- review the working policy in the light of the Headteacher’s report.

The **Headteacher** will:

- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents;
- monitor progress;
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school;
- deal with issues of inadequate registering;
- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor children’s absence;
- determine in collaboration with the Admissions and Attendance committee whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school’s Leave of Absence form, or absences which have taken place where no request was made;
- make regular checks on reasons for absence;
- contact parents regarding concerns over children’s absences, where appropriate, and in accordance with the school’s Safeguarding Policy;
- follow up cases of unaccounted absence or unacceptable notes;

- notify parents, as appropriate, that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate, with appropriate staff, strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the Local Authority (“LA”) over persistent absences; and
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up.

Class Teachers will:

- ensure children are registered accurately by 9.05am and 1.00 pm;
- record correctly in the register or inform the office of any known planned absences;
- keep the Headteacher informed of any extended periods of absence; and
- inform the Headteacher of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.

Our children are required to:

- attend regularly, unless they are ill or have an authorised absence, arriving by 8.55am; and
- if late, enter the school via the school office so that their attendance can be recorded.

Parents are required to:

- ensure that their child/children arrive at school on time and are in school uniform, prepared for the school day;
- when their child is ill and off school, inform the school of the absence on the first day of non-attendance and call again each day that the absence continues;
- where your child has a medical appointment, ensure that this has been properly communicated to his/her class teacher and that your child is collected/returned to school as close to the appointment time as possible; and
- make any request for leave of absence on the school’s Leave of Absence form.

Leave of Absence

Parents are expected to complete the school's official Leave of Absence form before any planned absence, other than medical appointments, ideally 6 weeks before the proposed leave. Leave can only be granted on the approval of the Headteacher and where appropriate, the Admissions and Attendance committee.

Holiday leave will only be granted in **exceptional** circumstances and **must** be applied for in advance on the official form. The form is available on the school website, but can also be collected from the Main Office.

Leave will not be granted automatically but will take into account:

- the age of the child;
- the child's attainment and ability to catch up on lost work;
- the child's attendance record;
- the time of year in which it is proposed;
- the nature of the leave requested; and
- the views of the Class Teacher.

Cheaper holidays during term time **do not** count as exceptional circumstances. The governing body has also agreed that fitting in with parents' work patterns or split families are also not classed as exceptional circumstances.

If the child is still on leave which has not been approved by the school it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Authorised absences

Authorised absences include those for the following reasons, but they **must be notified in advance**:

- Medical appointments
- Funerals
- Close family weddings
- Sporting commitments
- Musical exams and commitments
- Religious observance
- Armed Forces deployment-related compassionate leave
- Performance accompanied with a performance licence

This is not an exhaustive list and each request will be considered on individual merit. The Headteacher and where appropriate, the Admissions and Attendance Committee will endeavour to provide a decision on whether leave is to be authorised or unauthorised within 7 working days of the Leave of Absence form being submitted. A response will be given in writing.

Absence due to illness

Children who are genuinely poorly are not expected to attend school and an authorised code will be used.

Parents must

- Inform the school of their child's absence on the first day on non-attendance as soon as possible; and
- Call the school on each day that the absence continues.

Where a child's repeated absence due to illness is becoming a concern to the school and particularly if it is more than 10 days, the Headteacher may ask the parent to provide information that supports the parent's view that the child is too unwell to return/attend school. The information may be kept on file and the parent/carer of the child will be informed if this is to happen.

School Closure

The Headteacher will make every effort to ensure the school remains open. However, in some circumstances the school may have to close. The Headteacher must always consider the health, safety and welfare of every person who uses the school site. If at any point to use the school building would be detrimental to a person's health, safety and welfare, then the Headteacher must close part or all of the school.

If a decision is made to close the school, the Headteacher will endeavour to inform parents with the details or any arrangements that have been put into place.

Adverse weather

Absences due to adverse weather, such as snow, will be treated on an individual basis. In the event that severe weather is forecast or is developing, the Headteacher will consider either closing the school in advance of the school day, closing the school early, or opening the school later than usual. The decision taken will always result from consideration of the children, parents and staff and the "significant risk of serious injury" in school or whilst travelling to or from school. Any decision taken, will be communicated to parents as quickly as possible and via the text round service.

Taking a child off the register

A child's name can only be taken off the register:

- where a child has been registered at another school;
- where the parent has notified the school that the child is receiving education other than at school;
- where a child is granted leave of more than ten days and the school is unable to establish the whereabouts of the child and/or family. In such cases, the Safeguarding Officer will be informed;
- where a child is certified by a medical officer that they are unfit to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;

- where the child has been absent continuously for a period of not less than four weeks and neither the LA or the school, after reasonable enquiry, has been able to locate the child; and
- where the child has been permanently excluded

Ensuring attendance

The school will always attempt to work with parents to ensure that children attend. This may involve enlisting the services of the Education Welfare Officer and/or the Family Support Worker. The Headteacher and Governing Body have a responsibility to inform the Education Welfare Service (EWS) when a child's attendance becomes a matter of concern and to support the EWS in the actions that they may take.

In extreme cases the LA may prosecute parents who fail to make every effort to ensure that their child attends school.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, children and all members of staff. To help us all focus on this the school will;

- report to parents/carers on their child's attendance within the annual school report;
- contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance of 95%; and
- celebrate good attendance on a termly basis.

Complaints

Any parent who is aggrieved with the decision made regarding an absence should follow the school's normal complaints procedure.

Adopted by the Admissions and Attendance Committee on behalf of the full Governing Body on 16th December 2015.

Review date: December 2016