Roseberry Primary and Nursery School

Attendance Policy

Headteacher: Mrs E Dunn
Chair of Governors: Mr J Anderson

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Author of document:	Mrs E Dunn	**Job role:**	Headteacher
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Roseberry Primary & Nursery School

Introduction to our school attendance vision and ethos

Roseberry Primary and Nursery School seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential. The school will strive to provide a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn within a culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

Regular school attendance plays a vital role in children's wellbeing and their education, ensuring that their current learning needs are being met but also building their future ability to learn.

As attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils, improving attendance is everyone's business, a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, the school and partners will work with pupils and families to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Specific roles and responsibilities have been published in the Working Together to improve school attendance statutory guidance.

The school has established procedures and notes the efforts of pupils and parents to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Key Contacts

Please find the details of those with overall responsibility for attendance, attendance support and attendance improvement within our school below.

Name	Role	Contact details
Emma Dunn	Head Teacher	0191 3700182
Claire Phillips Claire Donnelly	Senior Attendance Champion	0191 3700182

If a pupil, parent or family is having difficulty with attending school and requires advice, help or support then they can contact:

Name	Role / type of help	Contact details
Emma Dunn	Headteacher	0191 3700182
Rebecca Dodds	Deputyhead and SENDCO	01913700182
Claire Donnelly	PSA	07771371391
Claire Phillips	School Business Manager	0191 3700182

Attendance and Attainment

We recognise that the relationship between attendance and achievement of our students is inextricably linked.

Regular school attendance is crucial to maximise pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to.

We will ensure that:

- All students have an equal right, and access to, an education in accordance with the national curriculum, or agreed alternative.
- Students will not be deprived of their education opportunities by, either their own absence or lateness, or that of students.
- Action is taken where necessary to secure an improvement in attendance.

The Law:

Parents need to make sure their child attends school regularly and on time. Because parents are responsible for this duty in law, they will be breaking the law if they do not do this and there are no good reasons for missing school. The School and Local Authority want to help parents if they have a problem. If attendance does not get better or parents do not accept help and support offered, the Council may issue a warning notice, Penalty Notice or arrange an interview to ask questions about issues surrounding their child's attendance. If parents go to court and are found guilty of an offence, fines could possibly be issued up to £1,000 for a less serious offence or up to £2,500 if the law breaking is more serious. In very serious cases, the court may involve the probation service or consider up to 3 months in prison.

Attendance Procedures

On the first day off:

If a child is absent for any reason, parents or carers are asked to phone the School Office giving a reason for the child's absence. If a child is absent from school and there is no phone call from home then school will phone home to inform parents that the child is not in school and enquire about a reason why.

Routine doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school time. If this is not possible, your child should miss the minimum amount of school time necessary. If they are well enough to come back to school following the appointment, they should do so.

Periods of extended absence:

If a child's absence continues beyond 1 day, parents are requested to notify the school to update them. If a phone call is not received then the school will contact home to verify the absence.

If the school receives no reason for any absence then an unauthorised absence will be recorded. Continued absenteeism and unauthorised absences could result in further action such as referral to the Attendance Improvement Team to consider enforcement action and possibly a fixed penalty notice (this includes unauthorised absences accrued through leave of absence taken during term time).

Help & Support:

If parents need help with attendance, it is important that they contact school about the issues as soon as possible. The quicker we know what the problem is, the quicker that we can work together to solve it, and put a plan together which will meet the child's needs and ensure children can benefit from all that school has to offer. Where needed, we can also involve other services to make sure that children and families get the right support, at the right time from the right people.

Communication:

We are asking all parents to please remember to report and explain the reasons for absence and to make sure your contact and emergency contact details are up to date. It is vital, that school can contact parents if their child becomes unwell during the school day or in order to discuss the reasons for absence.

The school will analyse absence across the school. As a result of this, some families will receive letters to inform them if their child's absence is lower than it should be if no prior discussion has taken place (unless this is due to frequent hospital appointments and/or long-term medical needs). If we have concerns regarding a child's attendance then we may contact parents by phone, letter, invite them to a meeting or make a home visit.

Parents may identify concerns about school attendance early on if they have seen a change in a child's attitude towards school or in their willingness to attend. If this is the case, we encourage parents to share concerns with us and we can work together to ensure that school attendance doesn't ever

need to decline. The quicker that concerns are shared, the quicker they can be resolved.

The school will work with families to discuss ways that we can offer support in finding a way to improve attendance.

Enforcement Action:

If, following the schools attempts to intervene, there is no significant improvement and no good reasons for absences (i.e. absences are not supported by relevant evidence), or parents have not co-operated with the school's attempts to improve the situation, the school are required to consider referring the matter to the Local Authority for enforcement action.

The High Court has confirmed that the school's Head Teacher authorises absences. If a child misses school a lot because of illness, or if school do not know of any serious health issue that would mean a child could miss school a lot, the school may ask to parents to provide medical evidence to authorise absences.

We are committed to supporting all children and families effectively, to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences, will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Punctuality:

Normal registration time is at **9.00a.m.** and **1.00p.m.** for EYFS and Key Stage One and **1.15pm** for Key Stage Two. Gates open on a staggered timetable every morning.

It is so important for all children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling, both for children and for the rest of the class. If a child arrives in school up to 15 minutes after this time, then a late mark will be recorded in the register (L).

Registers will be closed at this point and any children arriving more than 15 minutes late will be recorded as (U) which is a late after registers close mark and this is classed as an unauthorised absence (a number of these marks can also contribute to a fixed penalty notice being issued).

If a child is late for school:
All children arriving late at school will be asked the reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the school's attendance database, Arbor.

1. If a child is late (after registers close) for school on a number of occasions;

A letter will be sent home from school to parents to say their child's punctuality is causing some concern. An appointment with the Attendance Champion will be offered to discuss ways that the school can offer support in finding a way improve this. Incentives to improve punctuality may also be offered to pupils e.g. improving their punctuality over 2 weeks to earn an alarm clock.

2. If lateness becomes persistent with no identifiable reason –
A letter will be sent home from school with a specific appointment given to meet with Head Teacher or Attendance Champions for a 'planning meeting'. This will aim to address any issues which may be behind this pattern of poor punctuality.

3. If the school continues to have concerns about a child's punctuality;
Then a referral may be made to the Attendance Improvement Team to consider if enforcement action is required.

Leave of Absence in Term Time.

Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time **unless there are exceptional circumstances.** The school will consider each request of absence individually; taking into account the circumstances, such as; the nature of the event for which leave is sought and any important events taking place in school at that time e.g. termly tests. The DfE does not class the need for a family holiday as an exceptional circumstance.

An application for leave of absence must be made well in advance via a form which is available from the school website or in person from the school office. Where a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion. As stated in the most recent DFE guidance on attendance, if an application for leave of absence is not made prior to the time of the required absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

Please note that absence will not be authorised under any circumstances during any period of public examinations or internal assessments.

<u>Promoting good attendance and punctuality</u>

Attendance percentages will be shared with parents on a regular basis on Classdojo, in the school newsletter, at termly parents' meetings and also annual reports to parents will contain a record of individual pupils' attendance.

<u>Children Missing from Education:</u>

If a family move from the area and their whereabouts are unknown, the school can legally remove a child from the roll after 20 school days of unauthorised absence. It is **vital that parents keep school informed of any change of details** and regularly update them if details change. Children may be at risk of losing their school place if their whereabouts are not known.

It is also important that emergency contact information is kept up to date and that if parents are leaving the area, they provide details of where and how they can be contacted. If parents do not do this and the school is unable to trace a child, this would be treated as a **safeguarding matter.**

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body:

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed to parents and staff.
- Annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and students to implement the policy effectively.
- Ensure regular updates on attendance take place through the HT report and they will play a role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance. The governor's meetings will review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to be fully aware and supportive of expected attendance targets for the year.
- Ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off site.

School Leadership Team:

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents.
- Ensure the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the policy and its effectiveness, with annual review of full policy.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure government legislation on attendance is complied with and that the leadership team are up to date with any legislation changes and how

to implement them.

- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take responsibility for overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to the job.
- Report to the Curriculum & Standards Governors' Committee meeting each term on attendance records, data and provision.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.

Teachers and support staff:

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents.
- Ensure the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Ensure the senior manager responsible for overseeing attendance and any other relevant personnel are kept fully aware of and up to date with any concerns relating to students that may impact on their attendance.
- Ensure compliance with regulation and guidance on attendance.
- Work professionally with parents, carers, students and relevant agencies to secure improvements in attendance via appropriate support or enforcement measures.
- Ensure understanding and are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken each lesson and session.

Parents / Carers:

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, we expect that parents / carers will:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy regarding absences, ill health, medical or dental appointments, leave of absence in term time and punctuality.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences.
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and work with staff in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child.
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime etc so that the child is used to consistency and the school becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same messages at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance.

Absence concerns

Parents may identify concerns about school attendance early if there is a change in child's attitude to school or in their willingness to attend. If this is the case, concerns should be shared with school so people can work together to ensure that school attendance does not decline. The earlier concerns are identified and shared, the quicker they may be resolved.

Persistent absence
Pupils who miss 10% or more of their sessions at school are persistently absent. School will monitor pupils closely, sending regular messages and letters regarding attendance.

Severe absence
Pupils who miss 50% or more of their sessions at school are severely absent. At this stage a referral to the local authority will be made for legal intervention.

National framework for penalty notices and other legal intervention
To improve consistency of practice across the country there is a national framework for penalty notices.

At the point where there are 10 unauthorised absence sessions recorded in any 10 school-week period, schools must consider if:

- further support is appropriate.
- support is appropriate but is not being engaged with.
- support is appropriate but is not improving attendance.
- support is not needed, such as in cases of term-time leave of absence.

If support is appropriate, this should continue.

If support is appropriate but is not improving attendance or is not being engaged with, then a referral for consideration of legal intervention should be made to the local authority. This can include, but is not limited to a Notice to Improve, an application for an Education Supervision Order, Penalty Notice or Offence investigation Interview (PACE caution).

If support is not appropriate, such as where a holiday in term-time has taken place, a referral for a penalty notice will be made. (DCC - Penalty Notice Code of Conduct). Penalty notices offer the opportunity to deal with an irregular attendance offence without the need to go to court. Penalty notices are issued at a rate of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

There is an escalation policy which means that if a second notice is issued within a three-year period, the second notice will only be payable at the rate of £160. Further offences will not be eligible for the offer of a penalty notice and parents may be prosecuted in court. (DCC - Penalty Notice Leaflet)

If penalty notices are not paid then a prosecution for the original irregular attendance offence will take place. If convicted at court under section 444 of the Education Act for failing to secure the regular attendance of a registered pupil at school, a parent may be fined up to £1000 for each offence.

If there is evidence that a parent knowingly failed to secure the attendance and there is no reasonable justification for this, they can be fined up to £2500 and/or face up to 3 months in prison, be subject to probation supervision or have a curfew imposed as maximum sentences.

The school and all partners will work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.