

Redland Primary School Pupil Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Policy



REDLAND SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ABSENCE POLICY

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Rationale

Redland values the contribution high pupil attendance makes to good learning by

- Contributing to pupils' enjoyment of school
- Promoting progress and achievement in learning for all pupils
- Enabling children to maintain friendships and develop socially
- Allowing children to develop a positive pattern of attendance and punctuality

At all times the school will aim to support higher attendance through collaborative work involving: parents and carers, children, Senior Leadership Team and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Purpose

Redland School aims to ensure effective procedures are in place to encourage high attendance by:

- valuing high attendance
- having effective systems for monitoring attendance
- promoting the legal requirement for attendance to parents and carers
- promoting early intervention when pupil absence gives cause for concern
- providing additional support for pupils and parents when low attendance patterns become evident

Broad Guidelines

- It is the parent(s) legal duty to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. All absences will be classified as authorised or unauthorised depending on the circumstances.
- It is parents' responsibility to inform the school by phone of their child's absence.
- Requests for leave of absence, which are known in advance are required to use the school's absence request form. For medical appointments, a copy of the appointment letter is sufficient.
- It is the school's decision how to record the reason for any absence.
- Pupils who arrive after 8.45am will be recorded as late – persistent lateness may result in an unauthorised absence for the session.
- If a child has not arrived at school parents will receive a text message/phone call to clarify the reasons for absence.
- Long term absence which has been unvalidated/unexplained will be recorded as unauthorised and may trigger a referral to the EWO.
- Over ten sessions of unauthorised absence will be reported to the Local Authority.

Redland School will promote high attendance by:

- Valuing high attendance and improved attendance patterns
- Rewards for individual high attendance and acknowledgement of high-class attendance

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- Informing parents about attendance rates: for individual children, as well as by class and whole school levels
- Governors will monitor attendance regularly with the Head Teacher
- Contacting parents or carers if a child is absent and the school has not been informed at the beginning of the day

The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team will regularly monitor attendance. The school target for attendance is 96%.

SCHOOL ACTIONS*

- Attendance below 94% (from term 2 onwards): letter to parents (by post)
- Attendance below 90%: Continued issues with attendance triggers a second letter in Term 3 with an offer of support to improve attendance.
- Persistent non-attendance below the expected level will trigger a series of school attendance meetings with parents to outline actions, improve attendance and set targets.

Targets not met or longer-term issues arise:

- Request for proof of illness if frequent absence is recorded as illness
- Visit from the School nurse to discuss frequent illness (or referral to a doctor for a medical)
- Referral to the EWO, who may pursue a Local Authority attendance meeting with parents
- Parental Sanctions: fines and parent contracts
- Referral of parent(s) to relevant agencies for child neglect (long term issues)
- 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence: Referral to EWO with a possible fine (£120 per parent per child)

Attendance below 90% is considered by the DfE to be 'persistent absenteeism'*. Persistent failure to send a child to school can be a clear sign of child neglect.

(*this does not apply to families where a child has low attendance due to long term medical issues)

The Governing body to set annual attendance targets and monitor the schools progress towards them. School attendance is reported to the local Authority.

Conclusion

It is the responsibility of all staff to liaise with parents, each other and professionals to promote high attendance for the benefit of all children at Redland School.

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This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Absence Letter and Absence Form

Penalty Notices for Holidays taken in Term Time – information for parents and Carers

COVID-19

During the pandemic, we have worked alongside government guidance with regards to recording attendance and our procedures and practice.

Some of the information in this policy has been adapted to fit with how the school day is structured, for example, lateness is recorded linked to the start time per bubble. We have multiple start times.

We have worked alongside families to encourage and promote a positive return to school period of time post lockdown, and also good attendance.