



## Policy Statements and Procedures

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# MANAGING PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This Managing Pupil Attendance Policy is based on the 2006 Regulations by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 and were updated in September 2016. This Policy is also informed by the DfE Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance 2022 and the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024.

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust is committed to providing an excellent educational experience for all its pupils. We believe that high attendance is a key to pupil achievement. It is our intent to ensure maximum attendance for each pupil, as there is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance and low levels of achievement. Furthermore the Trust is committed to ensuring that pupils and their parents, guardians or carers understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We recognise that parents, guardians and carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home/school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

There will, inevitably, be occasional issues that impede full attendance and these will be identified and addressed appropriately and promptly. We will strive to work in partnership with parents, guardians, carers and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

At **Rosedale Primary School**, the named senior leader with responsibility for attendance is: **Niela Bamber**

### 2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to:

- Develop positive attributes in pupils towards regular attendance
- Recognise and reward pupils with good attendance and punctuality
- Include parents, guardians and carers in the process of improving attendance
- Resolve problems of non attendance in a professional and sensitive manner

### 3. PRINCIPLES

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust:

- Expects all pupils to attend school regularly, on time and properly equipped to learn.
- Expects all pupils to attend all lessons punctually.
- Expects parents, guardians and carers to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time, fulfilling their legal responsibility.
- Will act in accordance with: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

*Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.*

*For the first offence, a fine of £160 per parent per child is payable within 28 days. If a first offence and paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80. . This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.*

- Expects parents, guardians and carers to notify their child's school on the first and each subsequent day of absence, informing the school of the reasons for absence and expected date of return.
- Expects parents, guardians and carers to request term time leave in writing to the Headteacher. Such requests will only be authorized in exceptional circumstances. **Please Note:** *The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. No more than five days can be authorized.*
- Will maintain an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of children to maintain or improve their attendance and timekeeping.
- Will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents, guardians or carers as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- Will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Will work in partnership with parents, guardians, carers and children to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Will include child's attendance in reports to parents, guardians and carers on achievement at least annually.
- Will provide the Local Authority the names and addresses of pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days through illness, and to also inform a pupil's Social Worker and/or youth offending team worker if they have one.
- Will enforce the requirement to attend school punctually and reserve the right not to authorise term time absence where there are no exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a child's attainment and all pupils benefit from regular school attendance.

Attendance	Missing out on	Which means.....	Over 13yrs of schooling is.....
90%	1 day per fortnight	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years missed
80%	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years missed
60%	2 days per week	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years missed
40%	3 days per week	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years missed

It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the Headteacher, not the parent, guardian or carer who can authorise the absence.

### Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent, guardian or carer), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. An email from a known address is acceptable.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, religious holidays or other unavoidable cause (you may be asked to provide evidence for your child before this can be authorised).

The school recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, in these cases only the Headteacher can decide to authorise the absence. The request for an authorised absence for these reasons must be submitted in advance.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (Local Authority School Attendance Team.) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This may include:

- Parents, guardians or carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes however is recorded as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headteacher- may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

### The Attendance Support Team

Parents, guardians and carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance Support Team from the Local Authority. The Attendance Support Team will hold termly meetings with the School to identify and discuss pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or are at risk of being so, and to signpost such pupils and their parents, guardians and carers to the services available from the Local Authority. If the issue persists, the Attendance Support Team will facilitate a voluntary early help plan as part of a multi-agency approach. For persistently absent pupils, the Attendance Support Team will work with the School to provide formal support options, including parenting contracts and education supervision orders. If such support in trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Attendance Support Team can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices. The penalty is £160 (reduced to £80 for the first offence if paid within 21 days). If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice) or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A).

"If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence."

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Attendance Support Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. They can be contacted on [attendancesupport@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:attendancesupport@hillingdon.gov.uk)

### **Attendance Contracts**

A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent, guardian or carer, and either the School or local authority to address irregular attendance. A contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. A parenting contract is not a punitive tool; it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents, guardians and carers cannot be compelled to enter a contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent, guardian or carer's absence.

There is no obligation on the School or local authority to offer a contract, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but a contract should always be explored before moving forward to an Education Supervision Order or prosecution.

One parenting contract may be arranged with all parents, guardians and carers, or in circumstances where it is desirable to have different requirements for each parent, guardian or carer, then separate parenting contracts for each parent, guardian or carer should be arranged.

### **Education Supervision Orders**

Where a voluntary early help plan or formal parenting contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the School and local authority should have exhausted voluntary support and be clear that making the order would be beneficial for the pupil and parent, guardian or carer. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner should also discuss with the School's designated safeguarding lead and children's social care services and agree an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent, guardian or carer to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent, guardian or carer's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last three months for a period of up to three years at a time.

### **Parenting Orders**

Parenting Orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parent, guardian or carer agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent, guardian or carer has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

The order requires a parent, guardian or carer to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court, which can include a requirement for parents, guardians or carers to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's attendance for up to three months.

### **Notices to Improve**

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent, guardian or carer to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent, guardian or carer, or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents, guardians and carers a final chance to engage in support.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Fixed Penalty Notices are served on parents, guardians and carers as an alternative to prosecution, where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided. Fixed Penalty Notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent, guardian or carer liable for the attendance offence or offences, which should usually be the parent, guardian or carer with day-to-day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.

Fixed Penalty Notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where a Fixed Penalty Notice is deemed likely to change parental behaviour, and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).

Fixed Penalty Notices may also be issued where parents, guardians and carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed-period suspension or permanent exclusion.

The threshold for being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

### **Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences**

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent, guardian or carer in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent, guardian or carer in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent, guardian or carer in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent, guardian or carer in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

### **Payment of penalties**

The penalty is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. The payment must be paid directly to the local authority. Payment can be made online and instructions on how to pay are included on the penalty notice letter.

If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28-day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. Parents, guardians or carers can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made.

There is no right of appeal by parents, guardians or carers against a fixed penalty notice.

### **Prosecution**

Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

- Parents, guardians or carers who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require them to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents, guardians or carers who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are two separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent, guardian or carer fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent, guardian or carer knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to three months.
- Parents, guardians or carers who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent, guardian or carer is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to three months.
- Parents, guardians or carers who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

## **4. PROCEDURE**

## Registration Procedures

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 determine the admissions and attendance registers that all schools and schools must keep. They also regulate the power these educational establishments have to grant term time leave of absence.

By law, schools and schools are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the pupil is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust all schools use electronic registration to record morning and afternoon attendance. In addition, National Curriculum Year groups 7 through to 11 and Post 16 are registered lesson by lesson.

Pupils arriving at school from 8:50am will be recorded late and must report to the Main Reception and sign the late book before attending assembly, lessons or other timetabled activity.

On occasions where there is an interruption to the availability of the electronic registration system, a teacher will call a register and enter the information on a paper register. This register is then returned to the member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance who will enter it on the system as soon as it is available.

There are only three occasions when an attendance register can be altered:

1. If it is discovered that an error has been made
2. Where an unexplained absence has since been satisfactorily explained
3. Where a Pupil's name has been legally changed

## Registration Symbols

The following codes are used in registers in line with the Department for Education guidance:

Code	Description	Pupil counted as if present in school for that session?
N	No reason yet provided for absence – therefore unauthorised absence	No
O	Unauthorised absence	No
/	Present	Yes
L	Late (before registers closed) and marked as present	Yes
U	Late (after registers closed and marked as unauthorised absence	No
R	Religious Observance – authorised absence	No
E	Excluded – authorised absence	No
V	Educational Visit or Trip	Yes
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Yes
I	Illness	No
M	Medical/Dental Appointment – authorised absence	No
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed)	No
B	Educated Off-site	Yes
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	No
D	Dual Registration	Yes
T	Traveller Absence	No
Y	Enforced Closure/exceptional circumstances	Yes
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	No
#	Planned school closure	No

## **Absence Reporting**

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents, guardians and carers keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance; they are reminded of this duty.

Prior to the engagement of the Attendance Support Team and Family Support Worker, the school may issue letters to parents, guardians or carers clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupil's absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for Attendance Support Team or Family Support Worker involvement.

## **Illness and Medical Appointments**

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- An appointment card or verification by the doctors/ dentist/hospital is required. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- If a child is absent due to vomiting then they should not return to school for the next 24 hours after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.
- Medical certificates are required for absence greater than five days. This must be provided within 5 school days and failure to provide this information within the time limit will result in your child's absence being unauthorised and may lead to a fine or legal action.
- Where illness occurs immediately before or after a school break, medical evidence must be provided within 5 school days of a return to school. Failure to provide this information within the time limit will result in your child's absence being unauthorised and may lead to a fine or legal action.

## **First Day Absence**

When a child is absent, the form tutor or class teacher will record the absence in the electronic or paper register. As part of the Trust's Safeguarding Procedures, the school will endeavour to contact the parent, guardian, carer or other emergency contact if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

Parents, guardians or carers should inform their child's school by calling main reception before 8:50am on the first day of absence giving the reason and likely duration of the absence.

On their return to school, pupils should bring in either a note in the pupil planner or a note from their parent, guardian or carer explaining the reason for absence. The note must be signed by a parent, guardian or carer and should be handed to their form tutor or class teacher.

The member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance will run an attendance report at approximately 10:00am to identify any absence where parents, guardians or carers have not contacted the school. Contact will be made with these parents, guardians or carers via telephone or Truancy Call which is

the automated system used by some schools within the Trust for those Pupils who are absent without reason. If contact cannot be made with the parent, guardian or carer a letter will be sent home requesting the reason for absence.

### **Continued Unreported Absence**

If contact has not been made by the third day of absence and a note has not been received, the school will organise a home visit as a matter of priority.

### **Intervention in cases of Absence**

Under 96% - Headteacher discusses concerns with the parent, guardian or carer.

Under 95% - letter sent to parent, guardian or carer regarding attendance concerns. The Assistant Headteacher or other senior leader responsible for Pupil attendance matters, discusses concerns with the parent, guardian or carer.

### **Under 90% - Persistent Absence**

A Pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' 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 parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor 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 you will be informed of this immediately.

All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.

Persistent absence is a serious problem for children. Much of the work children miss when they are absent during term time is never made up, leaving these children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school education.

Where absence is classified as persistent, a letter will be sent to the parent, guardian or carer and a referral made to the Local Authority School Attendance Team. A meeting will be arranged with the Local Authority School Attendance Team., Family Support Worker, parent, guardian or carer and the senior member of staff responsible for Attendance (e.g. Assistant Headteacher). An Attendance Improvement Plan will be drawn up at the meeting; this will be part of an Individual Learning Behaviour Plan or Pastoral Support Plan.

Where there is no identified medical issue – a letter will be sent to the parents, guardians or carers informing them that all subsequent absences will not be authorised unless covered by a medical certificate.

### **Unauthorised Absence/Continued Persistent Unauthorised Absence**

This is likely to lead to the issue of penalty notices and other legal consequences as set out on pages 3 to 5 of this policy. The Local Authority issue penalty notices according to Government guidelines. The penalty is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. After 28 days, unpaid fines will result in parent(s) being issued with a summons and legal action being taken.

### **Truancy**

Truancy checks will be carried out as part of the First Day Absence procedures and when the daily Attendance Report is run by the member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance. Additional random checks will be run and checks will also be made when there is information that a Pupil may be truanting from school. When a Pupil has truanted from school the appropriate senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance will;

- Interview the Pupil and issue appropriate sanctions;
- Inform parents, guardians or carers, Educational Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker in the case of persistent truants for them to take appropriate action.

If staff are suspicious that a child might be truanting, action is taken immediately. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher and the Local Authority School Attendance Team. are notified. Parents, guardians and carers are contacted, either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents, guardians and carers to bring their child to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved. Every effort will be made to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If problems are identified, these are discussed and resolved with the class teacher, other members of staff who come into contact with the child and, where appropriate, with other pupils.

### **Long Term Pupil Absence**

The senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance will:

- Produce and implement a Long Term Absence, Support and Reintegration Programme. This will include scheduling a reintegration meeting with parents, guardians or carers, the pupil, the Educational Welfare Officer, Family Support Worker and if necessary representatives of external support agencies.
- Wherever possible make arrangements for appropriate work to be sent home for any pupil who is likely to be absent for a long period. This may also include online units of work.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the pupil to receive additional time and support to catch up on work missed.

### **Authorising Absence**

Parents, guardians or carers do not have a legal right to term time leave for their child. Term time is any time that any school within the Trust has stipulated as school days within an academic year.

Parents, guardians or carers requiring leave of absence for their child/children during term time must put their request in writing and address it to the Headteacher at least 2 weeks before the time of requested absence. Pupil term time leave of absence will be only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Absence for the following are examples of reasons that may be authorised where parents, guardians or carers have confirmed the absence:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Medical appointment (appointments should be made out of school hours where possible. Appointments made within the school day should be accompanied by a medical letter or appointment card)

Absences may be recorded as unauthorised when due to:

- Family holidays
- Truancy
- Absences for reasons such as shopping, hair/beauty appointments, birthdays, no uniform, etc.

- Absences which have not been properly explained

### **Punctuality**

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust also encourages its pupils to demonstrate excellent punctuality, which will be recognised and rewarded through Achievement Assemblies.

### **Lateness**

The school day starts at 8:40am, in order for a prompt start to be made registers are completed by 8:50am. A Pupil will receive a late mark if they arrive after 8:50am. Any Pupils arriving at school after 8:50am must sign in at Reception. In accordance with statutory regulations, school registers are closed at 8:50am. If your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence (U).

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Persistent lateness to school will be referred to the Attendance Support Team. This may mean that you could face the possibility of being issued with a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and /or the Attendance Officer, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. We expect parents, guardians and carers and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

### **Holiday Leave:**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents, guardians and carers to help us by not taking children away in term time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in term time are offset by the cost to your child's education and fines or legal action taken against you.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

1. It is widely known that the link between a child's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school and employment.
3. Graduates earn, on average, double that of young people that leave school with no qualifications.
4. All Hillingdon schools are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Holiday Leave.

### **Exceptional Leave:**

**There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday.** In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Headteacher or their designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent, guardian or removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school.

Exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the Headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

**We will not consider applications for leave during term time:**

- at any time in September. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class as quickly as possible;
- during assessment and test periods in the school's calendar affecting your child;
- when a Pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, guardians and carers and the child. If a parent, guardian or carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support.

**The Attendance Support Team will issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. The penalty is £160, reduced to £80 for a first offence if paid within 21 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid you will each receive a summons to Uxbridge or Ealing Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the Attendance Support Team will summons each parent, guardian or carer to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.**

**Performance Licences**

The applicant for a Performance Licence (usually the production company or theatrical agent) is obliged to seek the view of the school when applying for an absence request. Such a request will only be considered by the school when the child's attendance is at least 90% and the child is making at least expected levels of progress. A request may be declined if either of these thresholds is not met or if the timing of the requested absence could be detrimental to the child's education.

**Part Time Timetables**

We adhere to the guidance in *Working together to improve school attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities, DfE (September 2022)* with regards to requests for part time timetables. The guidance states that:

"All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package."

“A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents.”

To this end, part time timetables will only be agreed under exceptional circumstances.

### **Mental Health and Attendance**

We are guided by *Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance*, DfE, (February 2023), which states that “Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly.” Where a pupil is having attendance issues as a result of a mental health issue, any plan to help the pupil to attend well may also involve making referrals to internal or external professional support. This might include community groups, counselling services, psychological practitioners or, where available, Mental Health Support Teams. Any professional workers supporting a pupil with a mental health or emotional issue should maintain the same ambition for the attendance of the child as the School, maximising in-person learning where possible.

Where available, school nursing services can also play an important role in helping to alleviate barriers to attendance, by providing health advice or information to pupils, including an assessment of individual needs and strengths. The school nurse can work with young people, parents, guardians and carers and the School to offer support based on these assessments, including helping families to navigate health and care services.

The School has a duty to inform the LA where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days. It will then be determined with the LA whether alternative provision should be provided under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Deletion from Roll**

For any Pupil leaving *the school, other than at the end of Year 6*, parents, guardians and carers are required to complete a ‘Pupils moving from school’ form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child’s name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all our Pupils. In such cases, the Attendance Support Team should be notified.

### **Children Missing Education**

In Children Missing Education - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (2016), children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming ‘children missing education’.

There will not always be a safeguarding concern for children and young people who are missing education. Most children and young people are moving schools supported by their parents, guardians and carers, schools and local authority admissions services. A smaller number, however, are at risk of dropping out or disengaging from education and being out of school, they are at risk of exploitation, going missing and significant harm

As a result of daily registration, schools are particularly well placed to notice when a child has gone missing. If a member of school becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they should try to

establish with the parents, guardians and carers what has happened. If this is not possible, or the child is missing, the designated safeguarding teacher/advisor should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

In the circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, the Headteacher should inform the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation. Prior to doing so, the school should have made enquiries to ascertain whether the child is still residing at the home address and is not attending or whether the child is missing.

The school will use the Local Authority CME processes to manage any child missing in education. These processes are outlined here: <https://leap.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/6895/Children-Missing-Education>

## **Equal Opportunities**

That every member of the school community experiences equal chances, irrespective of ethnic origin, race, religion, colour, nationality, political beliefs, disability, age, sex or sexual orientation.

That every member of the school community is valued as an individual and that everyone understands that stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice and racism will not be tolerated.

## **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its Attendance Policy to parents, guardians and carers and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to the Local Authority and the Department for Education. Equally, parents, guardians and carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents, guardians and carers and Pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment.

## **5. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The success of The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust's Attendance Policy is evaluated through self-evaluation and review through:

- The regular monitoring of Pupil registration on the MIS
- The regular monitoring of school procedures and practice by the Participation Officer
- The regular review of the relevant priorities and actions within the School Development Plan
- Formal and informal feedback from parents, guardians, carers and staff following Academic Tutoring and other meetings
- Analysis of Pupil tracking data and test results for individual Pupils and cohorts
- Standing agenda item at Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings

## **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents, guardians and carers:

- To ensure their child attends regularly and punctually

- To contact school on the first and each subsequent day of absence
- To avoid holidays and any other absence so far as possible during term time
- To cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by the school or other agencies

Headteacher:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance

Designated Staff:

- Input and update the attendance registers
- Regularly identify and monitor pupil, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Liaise with other agencies as appropriate

All School Staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To see pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all school staff
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

The Local Advisory Board:

- Adopt the Trust Policy and review annually
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the Attendance Policy

## **Definitions**

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence from parents, guardians or carers is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.

### **Authorised Absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent, guardian or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent, guardian or carer writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can mark an absence authorised.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents, guardians or carers keeping children away from school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Holidays not agreed by the Headteacher.

## **7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

This Policy links with the:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Home/School Agreement

**This policy was last reviewed in August 2025**

**It will next be reviewed in August 2026**