



Part of **GIPPESWYK COMMUNITY
EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

Achieving success together

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by: **Governing Body March 2021**
Next Review: **March 2022**

COVID 19 Update

We are currently following Scenario D in our Rose Hill Road Map. Please refer to our Road Map whilst reading this policy. Please also refer to the Addendum which is an annex to this policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rose Hill Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on excellent attendance. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.
- 1.2 The whole school community - pupils / students, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors - have a responsibility for ensuring excellent school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.
- 1.3 The policy has been drawn up after consultation with the whole community and is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community know of the policy and have access to it.

2. School's roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Rose Hill Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 2.2 Attendance Officer
The Attendance Officer will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person, known as the Attendance Officer, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, pupils / students and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of excellent school attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body termly. (S)he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.
- 2.3 Registration
 - i) The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes.

REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in attendances

- ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.50am** and **1.00pm** for EYFS, **8.55am** and **1.00pm** for KS1 and **8.55am** and **1.15pm** for KS2.
- iii) The registers will close at **8.55am** and **1.05pm** for EYFS, **9.00am** and **1.05pm** for KS1, **9.00am** and **1.20pm** for KS2. It is the class teachers' responsibility to send the registers to the school office as soon as the register has closed. Pupils will be recorded as being late

if they arrive at school up to ten minutes after the register has closed. The responsibility for marking a child as late will be taken by the office staff. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will receive an Unauthorised Late mark and will count as **absent**.

iv) If a child records 8 unauthorised absences, a penalty notice will be issued.

2.4 Categorising absence

i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked absent (N). Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the attendance officer and Principal.

ii) Rose Hill Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be damaging to a child's education, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Rose Hill Primary School will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

iii) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

(a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example -

- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- in **exceptional** circumstances, (see additional guidance)

(b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

(c) where the pupil has a medical appointment set by a hospital at such a specific time that cannot be altered, even after receiving a request by the parents to change it. Evidence of the appointment will be requested by the school.

(d) *In the case of a chronic illness or other long term illness, a letter from the GP or other health professional will be required. This needs to state that the child is or is not fit for school, and state what times and days they feel they can attend school. This will give clarity to both school, pupil and the parents".*

(e) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control;

(f) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's /parents belong;

- (g) the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
- (h) the pupil is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which required him/her to travel, the pupil / student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits **and**, have reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
- (i) in other **exceptional circumstances** (eg a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.

iv) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house; look after siblings
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absence for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday; visiting relatives
- the pupil is absence from school on a family holiday;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

2.5 Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

2.6 Staff Training

The School Attendance Officer will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. **Collection and analysis of data**

3.1 The Attendance Officer will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body (see para. above). The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

3.2 Attendance is monitored by year group, class group and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils / students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

3.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfES within the stipulated time frame.

4. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

4.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Rose Hill Primary School and is regularly discussed in assemblies and in class groups. Weekly awards are given to the class in Key Stage One and the class in Key Stage Two who has the highest attendance. Pupils with 100% each term receive an award during assembly. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

4.2 First-day calling

Rose Hill Primary School has in place a system of first-day calling. Parents should call the school by telephone before 08:30am and leave a message on the answer phone. The reason for the absence must be clearly stated. Where no explanation of the absence has been submitted, the school will call the parent of the child to establish a reason. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. If no contact has been established by 10:00am the attendance officer and SLT will be informed and a home visit completed.

4.3 Contacting Parents

Rose Hill aims to support every parent to achieve excellent attendance for their child. We have set a target of 96% attendance across the school and this is in-line with Government expectations. Our aim is to support every child to achieve this figure.

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit - usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

4.4 Referral to the Education Attendance Service

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes (see para. 2.3 (iii) on page 4) will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence (see para. 4.3). If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. The school will issue a penalty notice to parents for unauthorised absences for being late to school.

4.6 Pupils who arrive late for school but before the register closes will be marked as L in the register.

- 4.7 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office
- 4.8 For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the school office and will be marked in the 'leaving/arriving during school day' book

4.9 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the pupil will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. Rose Hill Primary School takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. If, however, a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will make contact with his/her parents and or phone the police as soon as the school is aware.

5. Term-time Holidays

5.1 Term time holidays are actively discouraged at Rose Hill Primary school. Parents/carers do not have a legal right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. Where parents/carers need to apply for exceptional leave, they should do so at least 3 weeks prior to absence, in writing to the Principal.

5.2 Rose Hill Primary School will consider every application individually, its policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended holiday.

5.3 Rose Hill Primary School **will only consider authorising** absence for:

- armed service personnel returning from active duty;
- a family crisis;
- funerals, weddings;
- a pre-arranged hospital appointment that cannot be changed;
- religious observance;
- sporting events (county level and above)
- approved educational activities

5.4 Requests for absence for the following reason **will not be authorised**:

- A family holiday, regardless of a parent's employment restrictions;
- Family celebrations
- A regular GP, optician or dentist appointment
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

5.5 Rose Hill Primary School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving the reasons for the decision.

5.6 Rose Hill Primary School will NOT authorise a family holiday during term time.

5.7 Unauthorised absence totalling 8 sessions (4 days) or more will be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice Fine. A fixed penalty notice may be issued when 8 sessions or more unauthorised absences have occurred across the academic year. Not necessarily consecutive. School may send a warning letter about attendance when 6 sessions have been recorded and then expect to see no further unauthorised absences. If parents choose to take their child(ren) out of school on a term time holiday, without the Principal's authorisation, the child's absence will be unauthorised.

A fixed penalty notice is £60 per parent, per child. Under the Education Law, a parent is defined as someone who has day to day care of the child, this can include step parents living at the same address. Failure to pay the £60 within 21 days, increases the fine to £120 between 21st and 28th day.

Second and subsequent unauthorised term-time holidays may be referred to the local authority for legal action. In these cases the Education Welfare Officer will be asked to investigate and will decide with the school what the best course of action is. This could result in court action"

More information about Local Authority Penalty Notice Fines can be found on the Suffolk County Council website at www.suffolk.gov.uk.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. Extended leave of absence will NOT be authorised.

6. Parents' / carers' responsibilities

6.1 The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Rose Hill Primary School.

6.2 Rose Hill Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly; and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

6.3 Parents will also be expected to:

- notify Rose Hill Primary School on the first day of absence before 08:30am and every day there after.

- Write a letter or email with a full explanation of the absence to be given to the class teacher or office staff on the first day return from absence
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Rose Hill Primary School will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

7. Pupils' responsibilities

7.1 All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher / Pastoral Lead.

7.2 Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

8. Governors' responsibilities

Section 175 (2)

8.1 The governing body of an academy shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Reviewing the policy

The school will review this policy each year with its allocated Education Welfare Officer.

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS EYFS

1. **When does my child need to be in School?**

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.55 am** and the afternoon register at **1.00 pm**

2. **What happens if my child is late?**

Registration closes at **9.00 am** and **1.00 pm**

Mornings

If your child arrives between **9.00 am** and **9.10 am** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **9:10am** they will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Afternoons

If your child arrives between **1:00** and **1:10 pm** they will be marked as late, or after **1:10** this will be marked as unauthorised.

3. **Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?**

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day and every subsequent day of absence before 08:30 am. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not be able to authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report **and may result in a penalty notice being issued**.

4. **What reasons will the school accept for absences?**

- Illness
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (**please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays and provide the office with appointment cards**)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate which you will have to pay for.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters, etc.

6. Will the School contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This call will be made before 10:00am. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we are unable to contact to you we will complete a door knock.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

7. What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education. Your child will bring home a school diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it ready for the next day.

8. My child is trying to avoid coming to School. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher Pastoral Lead, immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons - difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Attendance Service is based at Landmark House.

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS KS1

1. When does my child need to be in School?

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2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration closes at **9.00 am** and **1.00 pm**

Mornings

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If your child arrives after **9:10am** they will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Afternoons

If your child arrives between **1:00** and **1:10 pm** they will be marked as late, or after **1:10** this will be marked as unauthorised.

3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day and every subsequent day of absence before 08:30am. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not be able to authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report **and may result in a penalty notice being issued**.

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A GUIDE FOR PARENTS LKS2

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.55 am** and the afternoon register at **1.15 pm**

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration closes at **9.00 am** and **1.15 pm**

Mornings

If your child arrives between **9.00 am** and **9.10 am** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **9:10am** they will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Afternoons

If your child arrives between **1:15** and **1:25 pm** they will be marked as late, or after **1:25** this will be marked as unauthorised.

3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day and every subsequent day of absence before 08:30am. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not be able to authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report **and may result in a penalty notice being issued.**

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

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A GUIDE FOR PARENTS UKS2

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COVID 19 - Addendum

2.3 There is also an additional code for pupils whom are self-isolating this will be coded as an X.

2.3 ii Due to the government requirement for staggered start and end times there has been a need to adjust start times.

The adjusted morning registration times are as follows:

EYFS - 08:45 - 08:55

KS1 - 09:05 - 09:15

LKS2 - 08:55 - 09:05

UKS2 - 08:45 - 08:55

The adjusted afternoon registration times are as follows:

EYFS - 12:15

KS1 - 13:05

LKS2 - 13:05

UKS2 - 13:55

These times provide a wider window of registration due to the need to facilitate social distancing.

4.1 - Due to the creation of bubbles there is an additional weekly attendance award for lower key stage 2.