



# Attendance Policy

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TOVE LEARNING TRUST

Attendance at Rushden Academy is the responsibility of all stakeholders: Governors – Senior Leaders – Teaching Staff – Students and Parents/Guardians.

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Approx days lost per year</b>	<b>Approx weeks lost per year</b>
100%	<b>Outstanding</b>	0	0
95-99.9%	<b>Good to Excellent</b>	Between 5-9 and 1-4	Between 1-2 and less than 1
90-94.9%	<b>Requires Improvement</b> Stage 1 and 2 school level intervention Lead responsibility of tutors and Student Support Leaders	10-13	2-3
85-89.9%	<b>Unsatisfactory – Classified as Persistent Absence</b> Stage 3 school level intervention	14-28	3-6
Below 85% Below 80%	<b>Serious level of Persistent Absence</b> Stage 4 school level intervention leading to involvement of the Education Inclusion Partnership	More than 29	More than 6

### **See Appendix 1 for Attendance Intervention Stage and Actions**

Our policy sets out the actions required to ensure high levels of attendance by our students and therefore support high levels of attainment.

The Central Attendance Team (CAT) of Rushden Academy comprises of the five Heads of Year, Attendance Officer and Vice-Principal. The CAT meets on a weekly basis to monitor student attendance and agree all strategic actions.

#### **(1) The legal framework**

- Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16
- Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken by Education Welfare with the support of the Campus

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, expect schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session

## (2) The Home-School Agreement

The Home-School agreement sets out the requirement for parents to ensure high levels of attendance by their child/children. Where there is an absence parents must:

- Advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate
- Respond to the Academy's 'Absence Call' system
- Please note that any **ABSENCE** can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation and/or evidence for the pupil's absence has been received. The Academy has the right to request further medical evidence which is the responsibility of the parent to provide to support lengthy uninterrupted periods of school absence or when children are regularly reported as being ill leading to irregular patterns of absence

## (3) Family Holidays and Extended Leave

- Parents/carers **do not** have an automatic right to remove their son/daughter from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their son/daughter is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year
- The Academy no longer authorises any holiday request during term time. All time taken as holiday during term time will be coded as **UNAUTHORISED**
- The Academy reserves the right through the Education Inclusion Partnership to issue Fixed Penalty Notices where a holiday is taken during term time
- Parents do have the right to request, 'Leave of Absence' where there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are those where absence is unavoidable due to a family issue such as serious illness to a close relative or a family bereavement out of area

Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

1. Length of the proposed leave
2. The student's general absence/attendance record
3. Proximity of public examinations
4. Student's ability to catch up the work missed
5. Student's educational needs
6. General welfare of the student
7. Circumstances of the request
8. Purpose of the leave
9. The level of any previous unauthorised absence
10. When the request was made

All requests should be made in writing to The Principal. Where a request has been granted the letter will state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents /carers has not been made or received, school **may** take the student off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the student fails to attend school when expected, the absence will be **unauthorised**.

Only in **exceptional circumstances** will absence of more than 10 school days be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified.

#### **(4) Late Arrival**

The bell for the start of the day rings at 8.30am and pupils should be in their first lesson at 8.35am. The school gate is closed promptly at 8.35am and any pupil arriving after this time **must** sign in at the Main Reception and will be marked as present but arriving late (L).

The register will close at 9.30am.

Pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late after registration (U), this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

An absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the student has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry. Students who are late more than 2 times in a week will be placed in a 'Non-Negotiable' detention on a Tuesday between 3.10pm and 3.55pm.

The official attendance register for the afternoon session is taken at 12.10pm at the start of Period 4.

Students who arrive to school after this time must sign in at Main Reception or Student Reception should they be on the school premises if circumstances have meant they have missed PM registration. A late (L) mark will be recorded on the register.

Absence will only be **authorised** if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, evidence of attendance at a medical appointment.

As a school, we are aware lateness can severely affect achievement. We monitor punctuality closely and have strategies in place to address lateness such as detentions and in the most concerning cases to seek legal action where this is persistent.

#### **(5) Using Attendance Data**

Students' attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority/Education Inclusion Partnership and other agencies if a student's attendance is a

cause for concern. Data will be used to assess attendance improvement or decline and in determining actions in line with the Attendance Intervention Stage and Actions (Appendix 1).

Data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends at whole school and individual student levels. This will be used to inform whole school/partnership strategies to improve attendance and attainment and will include analysis of attendance of specific groups e.g. Girls/Boys; Special Educational Needs (SEN); Pupil Premium (PP); Children who are Looked After (CLA) and Ethnicity.

## **(6) Rewards to promote high attendance**

### **(a) Achievement points**

Students receive termly Attendance awards to encourage improved attendance

Each term pupils achieving between 97% - 99.9% receives a Gold Certificate for EXCELLENT attendance. Pupils who achieve 100% attendance are rewarded with a Platinum certificate recognising their OUTSTANDING attendance.

## **(7) Key actions to address attendance concerns to secure High attendance to school**

### **(a) Formal meeting with students**

Any person/s working for the Academy and linked to Attendance has the right to challenge a pupil over attendance concerns. This will predominantly include, the Tutor, subject teacher, Head of Year, Attendance Officer and members of the Senior Leadership Team

### **(b) Contacting parents**

Designated members of the Academy have the right to make contact by phone or letter outlining concerns over a pupils' attendance.

### **(c) Formal Attendance meetings in school**

The Attendance Officer and staff designated as leads for attendance such as the Heads of Year and Senior Leaders can request a meeting with parents to discuss concerns and set attendance targets. Although attendance to these meetings is voluntary; the meetings are an opportunity to discuss attendance concerns and offer help and support to families in order to avoid the need for further intervention.

### **(d) Academy Attendance Panels (HOY meetings/SLT Panel meetings/EIP meetings)**

Parents whose child/children have poor attendance below 90% will be invited discuss issues surrounding attendance concerns. It is in the interest of the parent and the child to attend such panel meetings in order for their individual case to be assessed and Attendance Contracts which outline parental obligations and responsibilities to meet attendance targets and how the school will help support this.

### **(e) Welfare Support and Inclusion**

Rushden Academy can offer welfare support to those families via The Education Inclusion Partnership. This is a solution led and supportive programme designed to improve individual student attendance and address persistent absence.

The Academy can also offer a re-integration plan via The Curriculum Access Programme and Well-being support within The HUB.

### **(f) Legal procedures**

The Academy will follow a legal procedures route by making referrals to the Education Inclusion Partnership if all other strategies to address poor levels of attendance have failed. The Education Inclusion Partnership will then take on the legal responsibility with the full support of the school and its attendance data and records related to each individual case. Legal procedures will include:

### **(g) Court Action**

This will begin with a Pre-Court Interview.

All legal sanctions are applied in line with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The act states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence. A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

### **(h) Fixed Penalty Notices**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 has meant that Fixed Penalty Notices will be considered in accordance with Northampton County Council Protocols. A Fixed Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £60 fine is paid within 28 days or £120 if paid within 42 days of the date the Notice was issued. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is especially the case where a pupil is absent from school as a result of a holiday taken during term time.

The use of the Local Authority Fixed Penalty Protocol as a parental measure to improve pupil attendance is a serious issue. Any issue of a Fixed Penalty will be in accordance with the Department of Education School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures Statutory Guidance January 2015.

Additionally, from January 2018 the issuing of a Fixed Penalty will be considered appropriate if:

- **A child has been persistently absent**  
Persistently absent means 20 sessions (the equivalent of ten school days) of unauthorised absence over a period of 12 school weeks. The absences do not have to be consecutive
- **There is a period of unauthorised leave (a period could be as little as one day), e.g. for holidays in term time.**  
Term time leave can only be authorised for exceptional circumstances
- **A 5 day holiday or more over a 6 week period**

When a child is first removed by one parent and then another parent or family relative

- **A child is persistently late**

Persistently late means late for ten sessions over a period of 12 school weeks

- **A child who has been excluded is in a public place during school hours during the first 5 days of an exclusion**

Please refer to the Northamptonshire County Council for additional information regarding their Attendance Enforcement Policy. Please use the link below:

[https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/pupil-support-and-inclusion/Documents/Attendance\\_Enforcement\\_policy.doc](https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/pupil-support-and-inclusion/Documents/Attendance_Enforcement_policy.doc)

### **(8) Removal of Pupils from the school roll**

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded

### **(9) Elective Home Education:**

If we (the school) school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst we will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will we seek to encourage them to do this.

### **(10) Child Missing in Education (CME)**

Where there has been no contact from a parent/guardian regarding an absent child, the Academy will use all appropriate means to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. Where there continues to be no contact, a home visit will be undertaken. Should the Academy be unsuccessful in locating any pupil registered with the school the Attendance Officer will complete a Child Missing in Education referral to the Local Authority, this will occur within 10 days of the pupil missing in Education.

### **(11) Home Visits**

The school will undertake a home visit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day having received no contact from parents/guardians as to the whereabouts of their child if absent from school. The school will also seek the support of Northamptonshire Police to carry out welfare checks as part of our child safeguarding under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

**(12) Legal Framework:**

- The Education Act 1996 ;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011 ;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005; The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments;
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

This policy was been approved by the board on: 2 March 2020



Signature of AIB Chair:

Name of AIB Chair: Tim Foster

Due for Renewal: 1 March 2021



## Attendance Intervention Stage and Action

Between 93-95%

### STAGE 1 intervention

- **Tutor** monitors student attendance and drives improvement

Between 90-93%

### STAGE 2 intervention

- Meeting between HOY/Student regarding attendance concern – attendance target set/monitored.
- Attendance Workshop group
- Contact home

Between 85- 90%

### STAGE 3 intervention

- Formal letter of concerns
- Parental contact to discuss concerns over attendance and strategic improvement plan set
- Attendance Panel meetings- HOY/Attendance Officer

Below 80-85%

### STAGE 4 intervention

- Pre-EIP referral meeting with parent in school
- Home Visit
- Full review of Attendance actions prior to referral to EIP to begin legal procedures