

Attendance policy

Raine's Foundation School



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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Our attendance target for all students in Year 7 to 13 is 100% with a minimum requirement of 96%.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35 and any students who arrive after then will be given a Late Mark. The register closes at 9.30 and students arriving after that will be marked absent. The register for the second session will be taken at 14.05 and any students who arrive after then will get a Late Mark. The afternoon register closes at 14.15 and students arriving after that will be marked absent.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend owing to ill health – by 8.30 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6) by leaving a message on the dedicated attendance line.

Absence owing to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents should notify the school by leaving a message on the dedicated attendance line.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Any Y7-11 student marked late serves a detention on the same day. 6th form latecomers must sign in and parents will receive a letter informing them of lateness and their time of arrival in school.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

A student's attendance record is reported in writing at least annually to parents, according to the school's reporting calendar.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Parents should make requests for leave of absence in writing to the Headteacher.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting good attendance

The school uses the following strategies to support good attendance:

- Termly certificates for students with 100% attendance.
- Reward trips for students with 100% attendance for the whole year
- Communication about attendance at parents evenings and academic review days.
- First day absence calling
- Monitoring by the form tutor, Head of Learning (HoL), Attendance Officer and the Attendance Welfare Adviser (AWA).
- Referral of attendance concerns to the school's attendance officer.
- Setting individual attendance targets.
- Daily attendance spot checks for students who truant
- Half termly letters to parents/carers of pupils whose attendance falls below 95% for the half term.

6. Attendance monitoring and actions to address attendance concerns

The school collects and stores attendance data using its electronic registration system. This data is used to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. The school makes first day absence calls.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Y7-11 stages in addressing attendance concerns		
Stage	Actions	Description
1	Attendance Officer highlights students causing concern (attendance below 95% or particular pattern of absence) or is alerted by other staff	Students are identified/agreed by Attendance Officer and Attendance Lead. Form tutors are notified to undertake initial discussions/meetings and monitoring. Attendance monitored fortnightly.
2	Parental meeting with Form tutor if no improvement	Attendance target set, strategies and review period agreed.
3	Parental meeting with HoL	Attendance and punctuality contract put in place.
4	Referral to Attendance Welfare Adviser (AWA)	AWA meets with parents. Targets set by AWA. Consideration given to issuing a Court Warning Notice or Penalty Warning Notice if no improvement has been seen to date or improvements have not been maintained.
5	Attendance Panel Review with AWA and SLT	Parent attends with pupil. Panel of SLT and AWA to discuss attendance issues and concerns. Parent to be made aware if they do not attend or contact the school the meeting will take place in their absence. SLT to make decision how case should progress with advice from AWA. Parents/carers and pupils present to be part of discussion and those absent made aware of the outcome of the meeting. Parent to be issued with FPN Warning Notice (if appropriate)
6	Fixed Penalty Notice/Court Action.	FPN fine of £60 per parent or referral to the Attendance Legal Panel/SIP for prosecution for non-attendance. In this case an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will need to be completed (if not in place already).

6th Form stages in addressing attendance concerns		
Stage	Actions	Description
1	Verbal warning to student and phone call home.	a) If a pattern of poor attendance/punctuality is noted, a meeting will be arranged with the student to discuss the issue with the HOL. Students who are in receipt of a bursary will have their payments stopped due to poor attendance

		b) Appropriate targets will be set. The student's attendance/punctuality will then be monitored closely for two weeks. Parents will also notified by a letter.
2	Parental meeting with Head of Year.	c) If no improvement is seen within two weeks, the student will be put on daily attendance/ punctuality check for two further weeks with the Form Tutor. This will be reviewed at the end of each day by the HOL. d) Parents will be informed of any breach of attendance targets
3	Parental meeting with Deputy Headteacher. Final warning.	g) If there is no improvement and attendance is below 90%, the school reserves the right to withdraw students from future exams based on poor progress and commitment to learning.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher and senior leader responsible for attendance

The headteacher and senior leader are responsible for attendance make sure that this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the appropriate colleagues for action
- Works with the Education Welfare Adviser to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues alongside LBTH AWA Officer
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices alongside LBTH AWA Officer

7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information through the electronic registration system. Class teachers and form tutors have a role in encouraging good attendance and promoting the link between good attendance and learning with students and parents.

7.5 Office/reception staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls and information from parents about absence and record it using the school's procedures.

8. Children Missing Education

In the case of pupils missing from school and the reason for absence is unknown the school follows the Tower Hamlets Children Missing Education guidance and the following steps are taken:

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The DSL is the named CSE Lead at Raines' Foundation on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate.

The school recognises that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM or forced marriage. The school monitors attendance of individual pupils closely, as outlined in the Attendance Policy, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

When a child is missing from education, the school follows the procedure as set out in Tower hamlets Children Missing Education guidance. The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer and Social Care if a missing child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

9. Deletions from the school roll

All schools must inform the local authority before deleting any pupil from the roll.

The school will notify the local authority within 5 days about every non-standard leaver.

The school undertakes its legal requirement to seek to track and confirm the destinations of all pupils who leave the school.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the senior leader responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Off Roll Form

CASUAL LEAVER CHECKLIST

SURNAME	
FORENAME	
DATE OF BIRTH	
FORM	
LEAVING DATE	
TRANSFER SCHOOL	
TELEPHONE/FAX	
UPN NUMBER	
TAKE OFF ROLL DATE	
CTF GENERATED DATE	
CTF GENERATED NUMBER	
NOTES	
DATE FILE SENT	