



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2023-25

Approved by:

The RPHS Governing Body

Date: November 2023

Last reviewed on:

October 2023

Next review due by:

October 2025

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Ethos Statement

Raynes Park High School maintains the highest expectations for achievement and progress in all areas of school life. The school wants all students to achieve their potential and we know good attainment results from regular attendance. The Governing Body and the school expect 100% attendance but we do understand that there may be occasions when students cannot attend school. Students whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored. We will do all we can to encourage and support students to ensure they attend regularly and that any issues that affect attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Aims

- To help every student achieve excellent attendance and punctuality to enable them to reach their full potential and prepare them for the world of work
- To provide clear and concise guidelines on what we expect of students, parents, staff and governors
- To work with the School Attendance Officer and WPA/Education Welfare Service to implement any changes and to promote the value of good attendance

Responsibilities of the Local Authority, Staff, Students and Parents

Regular, punctual attendance is encouraged and promoted in school. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that a register is taken both morning and afternoon (any member of staff not taking the register daily and on time will be followed up by a member of the SLT) and it is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that the child in their care attends school and registers on time. If parents/carers are aware of concerns that are affecting the attendance of their child, they should contact the school to resolve and address these issues as soon as possible. The first point of contact for parents/carers should be the Form Tutor and then if necessary, the Head of Year.

Headteachers are required to tell the Local Authority if a student fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days, and the absence is treated as unauthorised. When it comes to the attention of the Local Authority that a child is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at school, the Local Authority has a duty under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to serve notice or a school attendance order to the parent. The notice requires the parent to satisfy the Local Authority that the child is receiving a suitable education while the order requires the parent to register the child at a named school.

Attendance Target

Raynes Park High School agrees attendance targets with the Education Welfare Team and the Governing Body; implementing a range of strategies to support students in achieving this target. We promote the value of good attendance with all students so that they aim high and we expect parents/carers to support the school and ensure their children achieve personal attendance targets as close to 100% as possible.

Procedures

Absence

Parents are expected to contact the school by 8.30am on each day of an absence. Students should return to school as soon as they are well enough or able to return. Reasons for absence or medical appointments can be written in the student's planner. We may request a copy of a prescription, doctor's note or medical appointment card should a student's attendance become a cause for concern (below 94%). Should parents not advise the school of the reasons for their child's absence or fail to respond to phone call, email or text asking parents to contact the school, we will automatically code the absence as unauthorised. If contact is unable to be made, the Education Welfare Team will be informed and if there have been three days of absence, a home visit will be made. If a student has an allocated Social Worker, they will also be informed of any absences.

Authorised Absences

Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher. They will only be authorised when school has received notification from parents/carers and is satisfied that absence is justified – this might be for reasons such as sickness or medical/dental appointments.

Supervised approved educational activities that take place outside school are regarded as authorised absence and include the following:

- Field trips and educational visits both here and abroad
- Participation in, or attendance at, approved sporting activities
- Interviews with prospective employers, further and higher education establishments
- Dual registered students receiving part of their education off-site at another location

Authorised absences also include the following: **Illness, medical and dental appointments**

Where possible appointments should be made outside of school hours and we may ask to see sight of an appointment card. We, and the designated Education Welfare Officer, with the consent of the parent/carer and if appropriate the young person, can consult the School Health Service or the student's GP if we feel we need more information or to verify the authenticity of the student's illness.

Days of Religious Observance

Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. It would be appreciated if parents could inform us in advance that they wish their children to observe a specific religious festival and complete a leave of absence form.

Unauthorised Absences

The school will not authorise absences if they do not feel that they are reasonable or justified and may ask for further proof such as medical evidence in order to authorise such absence, otherwise it will remain unauthorised. A referral will be made to WPA (Education Welfare Service) for students in key stage 3, when a student's attendance falls below 94% and following a meeting with WPA, it is expected that attendance improves. Any future absences will only be authorised if supported by medical evidence. If a student in key stage 4's attendance falls below 85%, a referral will be made to the Local

Authority, LB Merton Education welfare service, which could result in referring to outside agencies for support and/or issuing of a Penalty Notice and consideration of legal proceedings which may result in prosecution and a fine of up to £1000. The student's name will also be placed on our Safeguarding register.

Absence Requests during Term Time

The school strongly advises against parents taking their children out of school during term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 which became law on 1 September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a student can be away from school if leave is granted. Parents/carers must request leave of absence as far in advance as possible by completing a 'Leave of Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances' form, available in school and on the website, an application for a Leave of absence will be responded to in writing within 7 days.

If we have not agreed the absence request and a student still takes the leave of absence, it will be unauthorised. If an absence has been approved but the student fails to return to school on the agreed date any further absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We are able to remove a student's name from the school roll if they fail to return to school within 20 school days of the agreed date of return unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, and after reasonable enquiries have been made.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices may now be issued as a result of Unauthorised Leave of Absence. They may be issued where parents have taken their children out of school for 5 days or more, including in a rolling four month period, a Leave of Absence without school authorisation during term times in accordance with the published 'Penalty Notice for Headteachers'. Headteachers may in this instance request that the Local Authority issue a penalty notice.

If the refusal is ignored, any absences will be unauthorised. It is very likely that the matter will result in a Penalty Notice, which carries a fine of £60.00 per parent if paid within 21 days, rising to £120.00 per parent if paid within 21-28 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 and receive a fine of up to £ 1000.00

Penalty Notice fines for unauthorised leave of absences, are issued to those with parental responsibility and/or day to day care and control of the child. Each case is considered on their Merits.

Listed below are the instances when a Penalty Notice might be issued:

- Unauthorised leave of absence in term time 5 days or more. In the case of separated parents, the Penalty Notice will only be sent to the parent asking for leave of absence and/or taking the student out of school
- Externally excluded students seen in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours (*this applies to the first 5 days of each exclusion*)

- A parent who is failing to ensure their child’s regular school attendance and is failing to engage with any supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare

The Local Authority will send parents a formal warning that they may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice. The exception will be unauthorised leave of absence in term time when no warning letter will be sent.

Truancy

If truancy is suspected, the parent/carer will be contacted at the first opportunity. The student involved will then be expected to make up the time they have lost during break and after school, or be brought in on Inset Days to complete any work missed.

Broken Attendance

The school works closely with Education Welfare to monitor attendance and any student with a regular pattern of broken attendance will be discussed with the Head of Year and Form Tutor in an effort to identify and resolve issues that might be affecting attendance.

Every term the school will send a letter to parents with an attendance grid showing the percentage attendance and number of late marks for those students whose attendance is causing concern. The parents will be asked to contact the school to discuss measures for improving attendance when the attendance % falls below 95%. If there is still cause for concern, parents/carers will be invited into school to meet with the Head of Year/ School Attendance Officer/Education Welfare Officer to discuss the situation, and complete a parenting contract, which will run for a minimum of twelve weeks and reviewed at six weeks. The parenting contract can last up to a year, and the school will implement this as a supportive measure. Should there still be no improvement, these students may then be referred to Education Welfare for further support and an attendance plan agreed.

Attendance Actions flow chart



Registrations

- AM Registration is taken at tutor time (8.40am)
- PM Registration is taken from period 4 (12.20pm)

Lateness

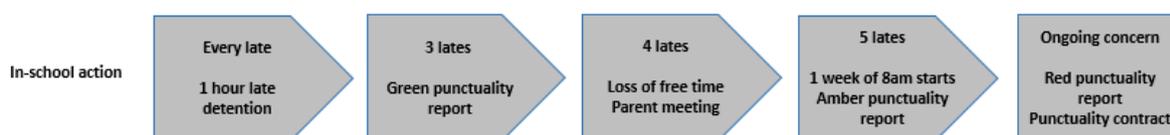
Lateness before the close of registration

Students are expected to be at school from 8.30am. At 8.40am the school gates are closed, any students who have not arrived by this time are late. Registration runs from 8.40am – 9am. Students should be in their form room for registration in plenty of time and any student arriving after 8.40 am

will be marked L – late. Any student who arrives after 9.30am will be coded as ‘U’ which is an unauthorised absence (unless medical evidence is produced).

If a student is late to school/registration they will attend an afterschool detention from 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm the same day. Should a student fail to attend the late detention, they must stay to complete a 1-hour Head of Year detention (3.00 – 4.00pm). Failure to attend the HoY detention will result in a SLT Detention on Friday (3.00 – 4.30pm). A Punctuality Report may be issued which is monitored by the Deputy Head of Year. If there is no improvement the student will be referred to their Head of Year and a meeting will be organised with parents/carers. If the student is absent on the day of the detention, they are automatically put on the detention for the day of their return to school. Parents will be notified via the parent app if a student has to complete a HoY or SLT Detention. Late sanctions are reset every Half term. When a student accrues 4 lates in a Half Term, they are given 1 week of loss of free time. When a student accrues 5 lates in a Half Term, they are given 1 week of 8.00am starts which are held in the Drama Studio.

Persistent Late Offenders



**Students who fail to attend late detention will be moved to attend a HoY detention (60 minutes). Failure to attend the HoY detention will result in a Senior Leadership detention (90 minutes).*

Punctuality Report: Green - Those students who are late to registration more than 3 times in any half term will be placed on a Punctuality Report to their Pastoral Support Officer for 2 weeks.

Punctuality report: Amber - If there is no improvement with the Pastoral Support Officer Punctuality Report (Green), parents will be invited in for a meeting with the Head of Year and placed on a HoY Punctuality Report (Amber) for 2 weeks to their HOY. They will be expected to start school at 8am for 1 week.

Punctuality report: Red - Should the student fail the HoY Punctuality Report (Amber), they will be placed on a ST Punctuality Report (Red) for 2 weeks reporting to the Senior Teacher Ms Karadal.

Rewards

Celebration assemblies are held at the end of each term. Rewards for attendance and punctuality are given for outstanding attendance and a prize draw is held during the whole school celebration assembly. The prize is a gift card and in the lower school students receive a certificate as well. Students who have attended whilst struggling against illness may also be rewarded for their endeavours. Postcards/Letters are sent home half termly/termly in addition to tutor group awards.

Evaluation

- Weekly Attendance Reports to SLT
- Termly Attendance Reports to Standard and Quality Committee
- Weekly Attendance Reports to HoY

- Weekly Absence Reports to Form Tutors

Annual Report (including comparative data) to Standards and Quality Committee

POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the Governing Body according to its schedule of review. However, in the event of any new legislation or issues raised, this policy would be reviewed as required.

Staff responsible	ST: E Karadal DHT: J Mc Inerney	Monitoring & Evaluation by	Headteacher: K Taylor
School Group Responsible	Pastoral team	Governors Committee Responsible	Standards & Quality
Date approved by Governors	November 2023	Review Date	November 2025