



Raynville

Academy

# Attendance Policy

**November 2021**

**(To be reviewed annually)**



At Raynville we strongly believe that education is of vital importance to the development of every child. Having access to and receiving a good education is the best way to ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes, empowering them to make positive choices in their future lives. We are a part of the Great Heights Multi-Academy Trust, and report to our Board of Governors and Trustees about our school attendance. We work closely with our partners at Bramley Cluster and Leeds City Council, and refer families to partner agencies for attendance support.

It is the responsibility of all schools, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all children and young people receive an appropriate education, suitable to their needs.

Our Attendance Team is Jane Hopwood (Vice Principal), Adele Baranyi (Inclusion Assistant), Jo Briscoe (Pastoral & Inclusion Officer FS & KS1) and Gill Kilner (Pastoral & Inclusion Officer KS2). Louise Harrison is our Attendance Governor. Our Office Team is Karen Edwards (Business Manager), Adele Grant and Sarah Redshaw (Administrative Officers).

## **Attendance is defined as:**

**Participation in a programme of educational activities arranged by the school, this may include off site provision.**

- Children must attend regularly to achieve their full potential, personally, socially and academically.
- Children who miss out on school are more likely to develop emotional and mental health difficulties, such as anxiety, low self-esteem etc.
- Taking holidays in term time is disruptive and can seriously affect children's education.
- Persistent unauthorised absences will lead to legal action, for instance parenting orders and fines.

## **The Government expects:**

- Schools and local authorities to:
  - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
  - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and to act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.
- Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time.

Attendance during one school year	Equals days absent in one year	Which is approximately weeks absent in one year	Which means the number of lessons missed	Absences if at this % over 5 years
98%	Less than 4 days	Less than a week	20 lessons	No concern
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons	¼ Year
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons	½ Year
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 Lessons	1 Year
70%	57 Days	11 ½ Weeks	288 Lessons	1 ¼ Year
60%	80 Days	16 Weeks	400 Lessons	2 Years
50%	100 Days	20 Weeks	500 Lessons	2 ½ Years

The table above shows the link between % attendance at school and number of days absent

## **THE LAW**

- Teachers must complete the daily class register and enter the appropriate absence codes.
- A school must report to the DfE absences, authorised and unauthorised.
- Any holiday taken during term time will be reported to Leeds City Council and in many cases will incur a fine.

### **Examples of authorised absence:**

- Personal illness
- Medical / dental appointments, if they cannot be made outside of school time
- Religious observance, within guidelines
- Family funerals

### **Examples of unauthorised absence:**

- Shopping / haircut in school hours
- Sleeping in
- Day off for anything other than illness
- Holidays during school time
- Any absence where school has not been contacted by phone, letter or in person

### **Holidays, leave of absence and Local Authority fines:**

Since September 2013 schools are not allowed to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time.

Requests for absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and a holiday would not be considered exceptional. Requests must be made to the school in advance, as the DfE insists schools cannot authorise any absences after they have been taken. A form is available

from the school office for families to inform the Principal of any request of absence, and allows parents to explain in writing why they require their child to miss school.

Most requests for absence will be unauthorised, as only truly exceptional circumstances are allowed. If a child misses 10 sessions, which equates to 5 full days, then a fixed penalty fine will be applied by the Local Authority. If a child has several short unauthorised holidays over an academic year then a fine may be applied if the days accumulate to 10 or more sessions lost. Furthermore, if a family takes more than one unauthorised holiday within an academic year they can be fined for each absence in turn.

Penalty notices are issued per child per parent at a rate of £60 per notice, to be paid in full in 21 days. If not paid the penalty notice increases to £120 per parent to be paid in full in 7 days.

Once paid the parent/carer has discharged their liability for the offence.

Should the parent/carer fail to pay then the case will be considered for presentation to the magistrates under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for the offence of failing to ensure their child attends school regularly. Should this happen, parents/carers face a fine of up to £1000 and a criminal record if they are found guilty.

### **Encouraging Good Attendance**

The staff at Raynville strive to make every child feel safe and welcome in school. Children are at the centre of our school community, and we work hard to build good relationships with them and their families.

If a child is experiencing difficulties at home or at school then we have experienced staff across school to help them feel listened to, included and who are then able to get the help the child or family need.

Parents/Carers are regularly made aware of their child's attendance. At Parents' Consultations they receive a printed copy of their child's registration record, and again as part of their end of year report.

We use a traffic light system to colour code attendance data to parents, setting out what our expectations are and the level of concern their child may be currently be reaching.



%	What this level of attendance means:
96% +	<b>Excellent</b> – well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
95% to 93%	<b>Average</b> – well done, strive to build on this.
92% to 91% <b>Absentee Watch</b>	<b>Poor</b> – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Parents/Carers will be invited to an Absentee Watch meeting in school, to identify and overcome barriers to better attendance. If attendance does not improve families will be referred to the Bramley Cluster, for family support, and the family will move to Persistent Absentee Watch level of intervention.
Below 90% <b>Persistent Absentee Watch</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b> – Absence is causing a <b>SERIOUS CONCERN</b> . It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child’s learning. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offense. Parents/Carers will be invited to a Persistent Absentee Watch meeting in school, to identify and overcome barriers to better attendance. A referral to the Cluster will be made, with a view to legal action if attendance does not improve.

**Ways we support good attendance:**

- A warm welcome every day.
- A safe and inclusive school community, where every child and family is valued and supported.
- Incentives and initiatives to promote punctuality and good attendance, for example prizes, termly certificates, parties.
- Our Attendance Governor champions good practice to improve and respond to school attendance issues.
- Each Class Council discusses attendance in their regular meetings; their ideas and views feed into School Council decision making around initiatives, prizes etc.
- Track and monitor the attendance of *all* children including those in nursery provision.
- Share a child’s Registration Certificate when transferring information between schools.

**In support of this, we work with partner agencies:**

- Engage with children and their families to address poor attendance and underlying reasons for it, eg Bramley Cluster, Social Care, Signpost, MST.
- Use holistic tools for identifying difficulties and planning a way forwards e.g. Early Help Plans.
- Promote a positive message to children and their families about the importance of school attendance and getting the most from education and learning opportunities in the area eg BARCA, West Leeds Activity Centre, ABC and Oasis, Medical Needs Education Service etc.