



**Rose Hill Primary School  
&**

**Rose Hill and Littlemore Children's Centre**

**WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

# **December 2016**

Date Ratified	Signed By / position	Signature
08/02/2017	Head Teacher	Sue Vermes
08/02/2017	Chair of Governors	Margaret Wolf
08/02/2017	Lead Member of Staff	Fleur Belcher
Review Date: January 2018		

Appendices:



## Rose Hill Primary School & Rose Hill and Littlemore Children's Centre

### Whole School Attendance Policy

#### Introduction

Rose Hill Primary School and Children's Centre is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all children and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all children feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to children and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including, for example, newsletters and end of term reports, and certificates for children who achieve 100% attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school and Children's Centre attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

Each year the school and Children's Centre will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Oxfordshire attendance targets.

The School and Children's Centre will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

#### School Procedures

1. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised (/ \), unauthorised (O) or as an approved educational activity (V) (attendance out of school).
2. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

#### Lateness

1. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at **8:45 am**. The **registers will remain open for 30 minutes until 9:15 am**.
2. Children arriving after the start of school (**8:45**) but before the end of the registration period (**9:15**) will be treated, for statistical purposes, as present but will be coded as

late (**L**) before registers close (**the attendance administrator will record this**). Any children arriving after **9:15** will be coded as late after registration (**U**).

3. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at **12:30 KS1 / 1:15 KS2**

The registers will close **5 mins afterwards**

4. Parents/Carers must inform the school if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day. For each day a child is off, parents and carers must inform the school. If no reason is given within 2 weeks the absence will become unauthorised.
5. When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

### **Absence from School**

- **First Day Absence**

Parents are expected to contact the school to report their child's absence. If the school does not know why a child is absent a telephone call will be made by the attendance administrator (using the contact numbers provided by the child's parents). The school will attempt to make several telephone calls to the numbers provided. If no contact is made the school may try to make contact using 'next of kin' telephone numbers.

The attendance administrator is responsible for making the initial telephone calls. If they are not successful having tried any of the contact numbers they record their efforts.

The attendance administrator ensures that the correct code is entered on the register, however, this should be achieved simply by checking that the class teacher has entered the correct code in the first place.

If a child is not in school and there has been no contact from parents/carers (i.e. no message left or school unable to contact them) a home visit is undertaken (two members of staff will attend the visit). If no one is home a standard letter is posted through the door stating the date and time of the visit and asking parents/carers to make contact with the school.

If a visit is made and the staff members are still concerned they will contact the school and speak to a senior member of staff to discuss whether any further action is needed, e.g. referral to another agency (Social care / Police etc).

In the case of an emergency the HSLW will refer direct to Police.

On returning to school, the attendance administrator will record on the register the correct code, to reflect the circumstances for the absence. HSLWs will also record any information gained from a home visit and any action taken. If the child is known to Social Care a member of the safeguarding team will automatically contact the designated social worker.

- **3-5 day absence**

The same procedures are followed as with first day absence. All contact numbers (next of kin) on Integris will be tried. At this time advice may be sought from Social Care regarding how to proceed.

- **Ten Day Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to Oxfordshire County Council, Attendance and Engagement Team. ***[This is a legal requirement]***. The school will include details of the action they have taken.

### **Absence Notes**

Absence notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the child that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns, by notifying the attendance administrator.

In cases where a child begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

If a child's attendance is less than 90%, the school will try to identify the reason for absence. If this is a cause for concern, Home School Link Workers will contact parents/carers either by telephone or letter, to invite them to a Parent Contract meeting. Parent Contracts run for a consecutive 20-day period and set achievable attendance targets for parents and children.

A Penalty Notice warning letter may be considered, if appropriate.

### **If attendance has not improved after 20 days:**

The school may set up a multi-agency planning meeting or TAC, inviting parents/carers, the child and other agencies (who may be working with the family) to attend.

During the meeting an Attendance Action Plan will be drawn up, which will identify what support the child and parents/carers may require to improve attendance.

A review date not more than 20 days later will be set.

### **If the Attendance Action Plan fails to improve attendance:**

The school will make a referral to the County Attendance Team by completing, in full, the appropriate form. ***[A referral will only be accepted if the pupil has at least 20% unauthorised absence and legal action is required to ensure regular attendance at school. Referrals will also be accepted when children are thought to be illegally employed.]***

### **Penalty Notices and Legal Action**

#### **The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the School reserves the right to ask the Attendance and Engagement Team to either issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the Attendance and Engagement Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the School's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for School after registration is closed.

A child becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The School monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark **or** is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the School and a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, child and school to try and help resolve any issues. All PA cases will be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

## **A Welcome Back**

It is important that, on return from an absence, all children are made to feel welcome. This should include helping the child to catch up on missed work and bringing them up to date on any information that has been passed to other children.

## **Promoting Attendance**

The School will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School agreement can be used in this way.

## **Leave of Absence**

As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Parents/Carers should seek permission from the Headteacher prior to the leave of absence period in question.

The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school **if** the leave is granted. Parents/carers who remove their children from school without authorisation, or who do not return their child to school on the agreed date following an authorised period of absence, may face a Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution (see Penalty Notices and Legal Action above).

## **Attendance Awards**

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- Children who have achieved 100% attendance per term will receive a certificate and a small gift
- The class with the best attendance over a two-term period (1&2, 3&4, 5&6) will be taken on a trip to the cinema
- Children who achieve 100% attendance over the year will receive a certificate, reward and, along with their parents, will be invited to an attendance tea party
- Each week the class with the highest attendance receives the school bear for this achievement
- Each week the class with the most improved attendance receives a different bear for this achievement.

## **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our school's targets are:

- Attendance registers, by law, must be kept for at least 3 years
- Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes (Phoenix report AO2). Alternatively, electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made; these also need preserving for at least three years
- Entries in paper registers must be in ink
- All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

- All teachers to understand the importance of registers as legal documents
- All teachers to monitor the attendance of children in their class and share any concerns promptly with Home School Link Workers
- Teachers collect the register at the start of the day and after lunchtime, and two children return the register when it has been closed

### **Register and Admission Roll keeping.**

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

### **Categorisation of Absence**

Any child who is on roll but not present in the School at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories:

- [1] Unauthorised Absence;
- [2] Authorised Absence;
- [3] Approved Educational Activity.

#### **1. Unauthorised Absence**

This is for those children where no reason for absence has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without a valid reason.

#### **2. Authorised Absence**

This is for those children who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

#### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

**Note: Children recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

**Adopted by the Governing Body: 08.02.16    Signed: Sue Vermes 08.02.16**

**To be reviewed: Jan 2018**, but addressed with all new members of staff and new Governors on their induction.