

Good attendance = successful achievement at school

1. Rationale

Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are the foundations for academic achievement and personal development. They establish a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available at school and underpin the basis for the world of work. Attendance and punctuality are strongly linked to children's well-being and safety. Regular attendance demonstrates a commitment to learning and the school's policy. Please ensure that you and your child/children support our school policy about attendance.

2. Guiding Principles

We are committed to ensuring that all children benefit from the opportunities available at Raysfield Primary School. **Our expectation is that children arrive on time at 8:45 every day**, unless otherwise directed by the Headteacher or there is an unavoidable reason for not doing so such as illness. We explain about different types of absence in this policy and we will actively promote this ethos throughout the school community and encourage our children to achieve this. If this expectation is not met, we will identify and address the barriers that prevent good attendance.

3. Responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered children of school age attend school regularly and punctually and that they receive an education suitable for their aptitude and ability.

The school have a legal responsibility for maintaining school registers and taking the register twice a day. The school also has a responsibility for reporting absence to the Local Authority. We also have safeguarding responsibility and duty of care to all our children.

Pupils' responsibilities – we encourage our children to become independent young people including taking responsibility for their attendance and punctuality when this is age appropriate. Through signing our home-school agreement, parents demonstrate their commitment to this policy

4. Attendance

- We expect our children to attend school on time every day unless there is an unavoidable reason for not doing so for example illness.

- We will celebrate and reward children who achieve our expectations of a high level of attendance and those who have shown sustained improvement
- We will share attendance information with parents and children focusing on the link between attendance and achievement
- We will promote high attendance and punctuality through assemblies, class discussion, parent consultation evenings; always reinforcing the link between attendance and achievement
- The school will communicate attendance matters to parents via text; telephone; email; letter and through the school website.

5. Absence from school

There are only two categories of absence from school:

Authorised – approved
Unauthorised – not approved

Only the Head teacher (or their delegate) can approve an absence from school. That is the law.

Absence will be recorded using the code recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance.

Requests for absence in term time must be submitted in writing in advance to the Head teacher who will treat every request on an individual basis and respond accordingly. The rules about what type of absence is acceptable is set out below

Authorised (approved) absence – types of authorised absence that may be approved:-

- Leave of absence - for bereavement, funeral, wedding
- Medical absence for appointments – at Hospital or Orthodontic appointments. (Non- urgent routine check-up appointments should be made for after school hours or during the school holidays.) Children are expected to be absent for the minimal amount of time and not absent for the whole day.
- Illness
- Religious observance
- If a child is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised (not approved) absence – types of absence that will not be approved

- Absence due to birthday, shopping for uniform, looking after family members.

- Holiday in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed to by the Head teacher – in line with changes to the law implemented in 2013.
- Late arrival to school after the register has closed has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence can lead to parents /carers being fined by the Local Authority

All absence – authorised and unauthorised – will be analysed and subject to challenge to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence and each day thereafter informing the school of the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.

6. How our policy works in practice

Our school actions

- Children who arrive late to registration are recorded as L (late before registration closes.)
- Registration takes place at 8:50.
- Frequent late arrivals will be challenged by the school and letters sent to parents. Persistent late arrival will result in parents and children being asked to attend a meeting with the Head Teacher/Education Welfare Officer/or Family Link Worker.
- If a child arrives after the register has closed at 9.05, in cases of Persistent late arrival this may be recorded as U (unauthorised late arrival.)
Unauthorised sessions can result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.
- Attendance is tracked and monitored weekly, persistent broken weeks attendance may result in letters home/ meeting with Education Welfare Officer or Family Link Worker (see attendance flow chart for actions)
- It is the school's duty to report **children missing in education (CME)**, which links to our Safeguarding Policy. If a child is, absent for more than three consecutive days (without an explanation given) it is our duty to contact the Local Authority in order to access support services to locate a child.

Parents' actions

- Children should be in school for the start of Registration at 8:45 (lined up on the playground ready to enter the building)
- Parents will need to notify the school office before 9:00 if a child will be absent. **This action will be required every day of the child's absence.** The school has a dedicated Absence line, which can be used to record a message.

Medical appointments

- We monitor the amount of time missed due to medical appointments carefully.
- We acknowledge that hospital and specialist clinic appointments, including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a child having time out of school. Our expectation is that the minimum amount of learning is lost. We will seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. Proof of unavoidable medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school.
- Routine, non-urgent appointments must be made after school time and during the 12 week school holiday time throughout the year.

Illness

- Children are likely to experience bouts of illness from time to time. Some children will be managing chronic or more serious medical conditions that impact on their attendance. We will support children in these circumstances to ensure they do not miss out on their education.
- When a child is identified as having frequent absence for reasons of minor illness, a meeting will be arranged to discuss this with the Head teacher/Education Welfare Officer /or Family Link Worker

Holiday absence in term time

- If a parent feels there are exceptional circumstances that support a request for leave of absence in term time; **they must put the request in writing to the Head teacher.**
- Each case will be considered individually and the decision communicated to the parents.

Procedure

Concerns about absence from school and the likely impact on a children' progress will be communicated to both children and parents through our attendance procedures.

Please see the Parent Attendance leaflet to help you assess and understand our school policy better.

Please refer to the South Gloucestershire website if you require further guidance on attendance.

Raysfield Attendance SMART ACTIONS

S PECIFIC
M EASURABLE
A CHIEVABLE
R EALISTIC
T IMELY

LETTER 1 / Broken Weeks Letter	Attendance and /or punctuality is a cause for concern
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LETTER 2	No improvement after 4 weeks – invite both Parents/Carers (P/C) to Pre-SAF/School Attendance Meeting (SAM)
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During the School Attendance Meeting (SAM)	<p>If appropriate:</p> <p>Medical Letter/Medical Action Plan completed and Medical Consent form signed by Parent/Carers.</p> <p>4 School weeks from date of SAM review of attendance and/or punctuality to take place.</p> <p>If either Parent or Carers FAILS to attend Education Welfare Officer meeting the EWO will take the Attendance Action Place to the home of the child</p>
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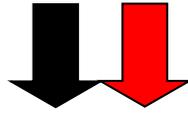
EITHER

LETTER 3	LETTER 4
If attendance and/or punctuality has improved since SAM	No improvement since SAM. Parents/Carers invited to a review meeting. At this meeting 95% + attendance target set for next 4 school weeks.



School invite Parent/Carers to Attendance Panel Meeting

LETTER 5	School invite Parents/Carers to Attendance Panel Meeting - 6 school weeks given to improve attendance and/or punctuality
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LETTER 6	School send Attendance Panel Review meeting invitation letter to Parents/Carers and invite Local Authority representative if attendance continues to be a cause for concern
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REVIEW MEETING TAKES PLACE



EITHER

<p>Improvement in attendance and/or punctuality since Review Meeting.</p> <p>Further review meeting maybe set or School continues to monitor – if Improvement to attendance and/or punctuality is not sustained</p> <p>Local Authority/School may consider prosecution</p>	<p>No improvement in attendance and/or punctuality since last review meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">PROSECUTION</p>
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Formal guidance informing this policy

- ❖ Education Act 1996 which states if any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.
- ❖ Pupil Regulations 2006 amended DFE April 2013
- ❖ Parental responsibility measures – regarding Penalty Notices (Fines) DFE November 2013
- ❖ Working Together to Safeguard Children DFE March 2015
- ❖ Keeping children safe in education. DFE March 2015
- ❖ Educating Children with Health Needs – DFE 2013 – Ensuring children with health needs do not miss out
- ❖ Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – DFE December 2015
- ❖ Children missing education -- DFE September 2016
- ❖ School Attendance – DFE 2016
- ❖ South Gloucestershire Council local code of conduct with regards to issuing of Education Penalty Notices
- ❖ www.southglos.gov.uk