



# **Attendance Policy**

**Reviewed:  
Sept 2020**

**Due for review:  
Oct 2021**

At The New Rush Hall School we believe that pupils should attend every day if they are to maximise the opportunities that the school provides. For many pupils their academic attainment and emotional, behavioural and social problems are exacerbated by erratic attendance.

- ❑ School starts at 8.45am for secondary pupils and 9.15 am for primary pupils.
- ❑ Pupils are marked late if they arrive more than 15 minutes after these times, except in the case of primary pupils where there has been a problem with home to school transport.
- ❑ The registers are marked electronically following input by teachers to a school secretary at the beginning of the day. This is generally completed by 9.30am
- ❑ Tutors refer non-attendance in the first instance to a secretary who will contact parents/carers. S/he then compiles a list of absent pupils, together with reason for absence and follow up actions. This is sent to the Head of School, Heads of Department and the school's Education Welfare Officer, daily.
- ❑ Letters or phone messages explaining absence are dated and signed by the tutor and sent to the school office where they are scanned and put in the child's file.
- ❑ As part of the admission procedures, parents agree in the home/school contract to send their child to school every day or notify the school in advance of a known absence.
- ❑ Pupils engaged in 'approved educational activities' not at New Rush Hall are marked accordingly in the register as present but educated elsewhere. This is particularly important since many children attend mainstream schools on a sessional basis.
- ❑ The school office staff will contact the parents of all pupils where no explanation for absence has been given. This happens daily.
- ❑ A list of absent pupils and the outcome of the phone call is logged on a pro-forma and a copy given to the Head of School.
- ❑ Where phone calls have been unsuccessful in eliciting a response, the Head of School will write to parents/carers after the second day's absence, to express concern at the absence and ask them to provide an explanation.
- ❑ The Head of School meets fortnightly with the designated Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss attendance and the welfare concerns. The EWO monitors individual pupils' attendance and whole school trends. S/he will visit parents to discuss difficulties and as appropriate will initiate court proceedings. In line with national guidelines, EWO and school monitor the attendance of persistent absentees – ie, those whose attendance is below 90%.
- ❑ Supervision Orders issued by the court are also monitored by the EWO.
- ❑ The school keeps detailed information on the attendance of all pupils and records types of absence and lateness. If pupils arrive late to school, they are required to report to the school office and sign the Late Book, give their time of arrival along with the reason for lateness. Pupils arriving late will be required to make up the time in detention at break time or at the end of the school day, depending on transport arrangements. Where pupils consistently arrive late, the Head of School will contact parents and invite them in to discuss the difficulties where appropriate. In extreme cases persistent latecomers are referred to the EWO. Parents can be issued with a penalty notice for persistent lateness.

- The school is mindful of its duty in loco parentis and responds promptly if children abscond. In the case of primary pupils, an adult will always go after the child and the police and parents are informed immediately if the child fails to return. When secondary pupils leave the premises, mostly staff are aware of this and it is a cooling off mechanism. However, staff are mindful of a child's age and vulnerability. If secondary pupils do not return after twenty minutes the school informs the parents and the police and completes an Abscond Form for police to collect. Pupils absconding are asked to come in to school with their parents the following day. Should the pupil return to school, the parents and Police are informed as soon as possible. Otherwise the matter is considered to remain within the jurisdiction of the police.
- Full attendance is promoted in the school in a number of ways. 100 per cent attendance is the school aim, which is published and promoted throughout the school along with incentives. Pupils who attend 100% are rewarded with a voucher in Assembly at the end of each term. A print-out of pupil attendance is provided and discussed in reviews and targets set. A child's percentage attendance and authorised/unauthorised absence inform form a benchmark for measuring attendance in the following term.
- Rates of attendance are presented to Governors each term with comparative data.
- The LA does not support parents in taking children out of school in term time. The school governors have agreed that, in exceptional circumstances, Parents wishing to take their children on holiday during term time may make a written request to the Head of School, to give prior notice and complete a form that effect.