

RAINFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



'Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the love of God'

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy should be read alongside the LDST Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2023-2024

Approval by LGB: 7th February 2023

To be reviewed on or before: Spring 2026

Signed..... Co-Chair of Governors

Signed..... Headteacher

To be approved: February 2023
Review period: tri-annually

Reviewed by: AR

Status: Active

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Our Mission Statement

‘Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the Love of God’

School Aims

In order to prepare today’s children for tomorrow’s challenges, Rainford CE Primary Schools aims to achieve the following:

- Every child will be encouraged to understand the meaning and significance of faith, experience God’s love and develop the spirituality to enable them to live out our Christian values of love, joy, peace, friendship, forgiveness, perseverance and justice
- Every child will achieve their full potential through being a highly motivated, resilient and independent learner who embraces new experiences, has confidence to tackle challenges and go onto develop a lifelong love of learning.
- Every child will value themselves as a unique individual with special qualities and strengths developing self-discipline and honesty; taking responsibility for their own actions and appreciating their ability to make a positive difference in the world.
- Every child will appreciate and respect others, celebrate differences between individuals and groups and respect and care for God’s creation and the environment.
- Every child will be encouraged to make healthy choices and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

In order to do this, we will constantly reflect the Christian ethos of our school in our relationships with our children, their families, our staff, the church and the wider community.

Aims of the Policy

Based on our Christian vision we will encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within our school, supporting their learning and development and safeguarding them, by seeing them every day and providing them with an educationally safe and secure environment.

We will:

- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality in school.
- Promote our vision of high attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Ensure there are clear procedures for the management of punctuality and attendance in school, known by all stakeholders.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children’s Services, health and other partners.

The attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents:

A big thank you to all our families who take attendance and punctuality seriously. We are really grateful to you for getting your child in on time so that they can learn as much as they possibly can.

Our target for the whole school attendance is 97%.

Every child has the right to attend school every day. Casual attendance and frequent absence really has a detrimental effect on children's education and emotional development.

Responsibilities:

At Rainford CE Primary School (and Raindrops Preschool) everyone has their part to play in ensuring that all children attend school regularly.

The School's Responsibilities:

Mrs A Richardson (Headteacher) has overall responsibility for Attendance. We do however have a team approach to managing attendance and other staff may be involved as needed. This may include and involve, your child's class teacher, Mrs Lisa Hirst or Mrs Rachel Heyes (School Office), Hayley Hewitt (EWO).

School will:

- Inform parents of their responsibilities for maintaining regular attendance for their child.
- Inform parents promptly when a child's attendance/punctuality is causing concern
- Aim to support any family in difficulties or crisis.
- Invite families needing support into school for a meeting with the school or the Education Welfare Officer as necessary.
- Will actively seek Court Prosecution when needed, but we do this as a very last resort.
- Value and reward good attendance; weekly, half termly, termly and annually through certificates, praise in assembly, rewards and a class attendance trophy.

Parent / Carer responsibilities:

- To ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- In case of emergency, we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided and the child should know these people).
- To keep in contact with the school should there be difficult home circumstances requiring support from the school.
- To not take holidays during term time as these will be unauthorised and a penalty notice may be issued. (Holidays are strictly not allowed in term time).
- To co-operate with the school in our aim to improve attendance and punctuality.

Understanding types of Absence

Schools must record every absence that a pupil takes from school, and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence and keeping school informed daily until the pupil's return to school.

Authorised Absence

Authorised Absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised Absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. School will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As our Headteacher should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event could be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.
- Forms to request leave of absence can be located on the school's website under Parents area.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

How to inform school if your child is to be late

- Telephone school ASAP on 01744 883281 if your child is to be late.

The school office is open from 8.30am.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8.50am and registers are taken at 8.55am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time.

- If a pupil arrives late to school parents/carers will receive a text message/telephone call to inform them of their child's late arrival.
- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.
- If a pupil arrives late on two occasions to school in a week, parents/carers will receive a text message/telephone call to inform them of their child's lates and that it is being monitored.
- If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the Mrs Heyes or Mrs Hirst in the School Office who will offer support if possible to resolve the problem.

At the end of the school day the gates will be open at 3.20pm – 3.40pm If a Parent/Carer is going to be late they need to inform the office as the child may be placed in the after-school club and this will incur an 'emergency charge'.

Absence

- Contact school preferably by 8.45 am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, keeping school informed daily until your child returns to school.
- Contact school if a child cannot attend for any other reason – school will support to ensure attendance and/or may record as unauthorised or involve other agencies as required.

If a pupil is absent, we will

- Telephone and text the parent/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9am.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised two members of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible. If there are additional concerns for the child's welfare and school staff are unable to gain access to a property to see a child, then school will escalate their concerns to the police.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carers will be invited to meet the Headteacher.
- If absences persist the Headteacher will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss next steps.

How the school promotes and rewarding good attendance:

Pupil Attendance Rewards

Attendance figures are reported weekly to all teachers and classes during collective worship. The class with the highest attendance in Juniors will receive a weekly trophy as do the class with the highest attendance in the Infants.

The monthly newsletter celebrates the class with the highest attendance and celebrates those classes with greater than 97%.

We have a system of rewards to encourage all to attend regularly.

- Every full term: 100% Attendance Certificate.
- Perfect Attendance for academic year –100% Attendance Certificate and VIP lunch.
- Excellent Attendance – Attendance Certificate for three sessions or less in year.
- Class with the best attendance – the class will receive a prize.

How we use data to promote and improve attendance:

Our school analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts or groups that require support with their attendance and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them and put effective strategies in place.

We provide data and reports to support the work of the LDST board or our governing body.