

# RISDENE ACADEMY



## ATTENDANCE POLICY Including Holiday During Term Time

Status: Under Review

Author:

*Adopted by Governing body:*

Attendance Policy 2016 - 2017 V1

Date: September 2016

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## **Risdene Academy**

### **Attendance Policy**

**This document has been agreed between schools in the Rushden and Higham Cluster of Schools. This policy has been produced to ensure a consistent approach towards attendance throughout the cluster.**

#### **Aim:**

Education provides a means of advancement for all young people to improve their life chances. Regular school attendance is a legal requirement for those registered at a school. Without it, the efforts of the best teachers and schools will come to nothing.

Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines that educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and in some cases can result in pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behavior.

#### **Organisation**

The class register is to be completed every morning and every afternoon. Registers open at 8.50am and close at 9.00am. Pupils arriving between 9.00am and 9.30am will be marked as late.

Any latecomers will be marked in the register appropriately:

L - late 9.00am up until 9.30am classed as present  
U - after 9.30am classed as an unauthorised absence

Continued lateness will be reported and discussed with Parents/Carers. Adults must ensure latecomers are signed into the late book, which is in Reception.

Absences must be recorded by staff using the correct absence and attendance code as issued by the Department for Education.

All letters explaining absences are to be kept until the end of the school year and then filed with the registers. School originated telephone messages from Parents/Carers may be disposed of at the end of each half term as the office has a duplicate record of them which will be archived.

In the first instance, Parents/Carers should report an absence either by telephone or in person.

Unauthorised third day absences must be reported by staff to the Principal or Parent Support Advisor immediately. Staff will use their knowledge of their pupil known history and use their discretion in ascertaining whether action is needed in

contacting the Parents/Carers. As a first day response, the office will telephone Parents/Carers.

A set of standard letters will be sent to Parents/Carers where persistent lateness and/or absence are in evidence. Where school cannot make contact with Parents/Carers, the Parent Support Advisor will be informed. Attendance below 97% for the previous term and annual figures will trigger action by school and targets will be set. If issues cannot be resolved then school will work with Parents to establish an action plan. School will analyse lateness and attendance on a termly basis.

If a pupil has more than 10% unauthorised absence and/or their overall attendance is less than 90%, then an interview is arranged between the Principal (or Parent Support Advisor) and Parents/Carers. If the child has not been in school for 5 days and the school have tried, but have been unable to contact home, then the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team will be contacted.

If a child is on a Child Protection Plan any absences must be reported immediately and these will be investigated.

### **Leave and Holidays in Term Time**

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the law gave no entitlement to Parents/Carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Principals would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

**The revised Attendance Guidelines received in July 2016 from Northamptonshire County Council states that Parents/Carers can be fined by the Local Authority when children miss 5 consecutive school days without the consent of the school. This brings Northamptonshire in line with the majority of other Local Authorities nationally.**

The Local Authority's decision to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice is based on information submitted by the school.

Triggers for the Fixed Penalty Notice from July 2016 will be;

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in the last 6 weeks
- 10 sessions (5 days) of consecutive days of unauthorised absence
- An accumulation of unauthorised absence leading to an attendance of 90% or less

*It is important that Parents/Carers understand that the initial Fixed Penalty Notice of £120 is issued to each Parent/Carer for each child with 28 days given to settle the Penalty. If the Penalty Notice is paid within the first 21 days, the amount payable is reduced to £60.00 to each Parent/Carer for each child.*

*For example: A two-parent family with two children would be fined £240.00 if the Penalty Notice was settled within 21 days.*

Requests for leave must be given in writing to the Principal and a meeting will be arranged to discuss the exceptional circumstance.

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. The Rushden and Higham cluster of schools agree to follow the law, in such that the provision for Principals to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a Parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside the above, Principal's must liaise with other schools where other siblings attend.

### **Leaving School During the School Day**

No child will be allowed to leave the premises during school time unless collected by a Parent or responsible adult. All departures must be entered into the Signing Out book in Reception. At special events the school will organise individual class lists for Parents to sign.

### **Targets**

Targets will be set for individual children when their attendance falls below 90%. This is subject to the reasons for the low attendance.

### **Responsibility**

The overall responsibility of monitoring pupils' attendance lies with the Principal. The school office is responsible for the collection of attendance data and producing appropriate responses.

### **Points of Identification and Monitoring**

At the beginning of each term the school will identify:

Children whose attendance has fallen below 90% for the previous term and for the current academic year.

The registers will be analysed to find the reasons and patterns. An initial letter will be sent out to set a target of 90% for the next 10 weeks.

Children who continue to have attendance below 90% but have improved receive a letter and are set a new target.

Children who continue to have attendance below 90% and have not improved will be sent a letter requesting a meeting between the Principal (or Parent Support Advisor) and Parent/Carer.

**Children Whose Attendance is Below 90%**

Letters will be sent to the Parent/Carer of these children to set targets if appropriate. If targets are not achieved then a referral will be made to the Parent Support Advisor.

**Children Who Have 10% Unauthorised Absence**

The parents of these children will be sent letters setting targets for their children.

Children who have persistent absences will have a letter to explain that a formal referral has been made to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team. A process diagram is used to record what actions have been taken and this will act as an audit trail.