



Attendance Policy

Date Implemented: October 2024
Last Reviewed: January 2025
Review Period: Annually
Staff Responsibility: Headteacher
Next Review: October 2025

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1. Rationale

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. **It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education** either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child **must** attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This Attendance Policy is intended to:

- guide, assist and empower schools to meet their responsibilities and to provide an agreed framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied.
- ensure all learners on the school's roll attend regularly
- promote the importance of attendance and assist all learners to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality
- ensure all learners take full advantage of the wide range of educational opportunities available to them through excellent attendance and punctuality

This policy applies to all children regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability

As a maintained school, The Reddings follows the statutory guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#), published by the Department for Education. This details the expectations of the school and the governing body, as well as the law regarding school attendance and the right to a full time education. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that this policy is followed.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which emphasizes the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

2. Senior Attendance Champion

The Senior Attendance Champion is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies where needed. The Senior Attendance Champion is expected to set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.

The Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes. The Senior Attendance Champion at The Reddings is The Headteacher. They can be contacted at head@reddings.herts.sch.uk or via the school office.

3. Parent expectations

Regular and punctual attendance is a legal requirement for all learners registered at The Reddings Primary & Nursery School and is essential if learners are to maximise the educational opportunities

available to them. Parents therefore have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and 'Ready to Learn'

Parents should:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- instill in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy of their children's school
- work in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours (unless specialist appointments which are determined by the hospital / professional practitioner)
- keep learners who have been sick at home are to be kept home for 24 hours from the last time of sickness
- maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- provide an explanation for all absences and be aware that in some circumstances medical confirmation may be requested to clarify the absence explanation

4. Promoting good attendance

The Reddings School rewards good attendance through a variety of individual and group awards, these include:

Class reward for 10 weeks of 95%+ attendance (monitored weekly in Celebration Assembly)
Half-termly class award for the best attendance (Attendance Cup)
Termly certificates for 100% attendance for the current term
Hertfordshire certificates for excellent annual attendance and the most improved attendance
'What a star' certificates may be awarded for good / improved attendance
Head Teacher merits awarded for excellent attendance / improved attendance / punctuality
Class attendance published in newsletter
Attendance Newsletter published every half term
Names of learners with 100% attendance and good punctuality published in the newsletter
Letters home for improved attendance

5. The School day

The gates to the school open at 8:40am and registers are taken in class at 8:50am. All pupils arriving after 8.50 must report to the office to be signed in.

- Any child arriving after 8.50 but before 9.10am will be recorded as 'late before registers close' (code L.)

- **Pupils arriving after 9.10am without a valid reason will be recorded as ‘late after registers close’ (code U). This is counted as an unauthorised absence and will be counted when considering if a pupil has met the threshold for Penalty Notices etc.**

Afternoon sessions begin at 1: 00pm when the register is taken again. Children returning from home lunch after 1.10 will be recorded as absent (code U).

The school day ends at 3.15, unless pupils are attending an after school activity. Pupils leaving the school before this time for any reason need to sign out at the school office.

6. Reporting absences

If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, we ask parents to do one of the following:

- Telephone the school as soon as possible before 9.10am
- Send a written note to the school
- Inform the school office in person
- E-mail admin@reddings.herts.sch.uk

Parents should include their child’s name and class, their reason for being absent and their date of return (if known)

Procedures for following up absences:

If a pupil is absent without explanation a member of the office team will call email via Arbor that morning to gain an explanation. If there is no reply this will be followed up by a phone call. If there is no response further calls are made throughout the day. All of this is logged on CPOMs

If 2 days of absence persist with or without an explanation, this is then monitored and further phone calls are made by the office team and the Head Teacher / member of the SLT if appropriate. All communication is logged on CPOMs

School will also consult with the Attendance team; this advice will then be implemented

If the school has not managed to have any contact with the parent after 2 days a home visit is undertaken (2 staff members). A written letter detailing the time and date of the visit and requesting an update will be posted through the door or mailed to the parent if this is not possible. If there are safeguarding concerns around a pupil visits may be made earlier.

The Local Authority will be informed if no contact has been made with parent/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate) as The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 Section 13 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils absent from school and where absences amount to more than 10 or more days, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised. This means school will have unauthorised 20 am/pm sessions of absences. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained/unauthorised absences. At this point your child will be considered to be “absent from education”.

If the extended absence goes into the weekend / holiday periods, the school may contact the police and request a well-being check. All actions are logged on CPOMs

7. Reasons for absence

Parents/carers must give specific reasons for absence. This enables the school to monitor patterns and fulfil its obligation to inform the health authorities of any notifiable diseases, such as a

Coronavirus, flu, measles etc. The following are potential reasons for an authorized absence from school. For a full list of reasons please see [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

Absence due to Illness

Unless parents/carers have been given a particular time of absence through illness by a doctor they are expected to contact the school regularly to let the school know what is happening. The details of telephone calls are recorded and monitored.

In the case of diarrhoea or vomiting, parents are expected to keep children at home for 24 hours after the last episode. This is to prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff.

Absence due to Medical Appointments

Routine medical appointments such as the dentist, should be made outside of school hours if possible. If a medical appointment is known in advance parents/carers must notify the school and provide evidence of the appointment. If an emergency appointment is made please phone the school before 9am.

Notification must be given if a child needs to leave school during the day

Absence due to Religious Observance

As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Absence due to agreed Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason. Requests for a leave of absence from school must be made in writing to the headteacher at least 2 weeks in advance. A form to do this is available at the school office. Leave of absence should be agreed with the headteacher before any arrangements are made

Each request is looked at on an individual basis, taking into account the nature of the request, pupil attendance and all statutory guidance. A decision will be given within 5 working days.

The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. (*Working together to improve school attendance, paragraph 38*)

8. Procedures for following up absences

Absences will be logged daily onto CPOMS by the school office who will follow the procedure detailed in section 6 above, involving SLT where appropriate.

In addition to this, half termly monitoring of attendance will be undertaken across the school by a member of SLT. This monitoring will look for any negative trends in pupils attendance data, as well as for pupils whose attendance is below 96%

Persistent Absenteeism

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year) they are classed as persistently absent. Schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils

Absence at this level damages any child's educational potential and we will try to work with parents/carers to improve attendance rates quickly. Persistent absentees are monitored carefully through our pastoral system and this is combined with academic support where absence adversely affects attainment. Letters will be sent home detailing pupil's attendance, and meetings sought between families and the School Attendance Champion. All persistent absentees are automatically made known to the Local Attendance Improvement Officer, who conducts regular checks.

The statutory guidance outlines the various options available to schools to address persistent absence. These are:

- Attendance contracts
- Education Supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders

The school will consider all of these options on a case by case basis. Always, the focus is on supporting families to improve attendance wherever possible.

Fixed Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England.

The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold be met with:

- any combination of unauthorised absence
- sessions can be consecutive but do not have to be
- The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years

In the case of holidays taken within term time that meet the threshold, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carers may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carers is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. (

Where support is not engaged with or not appropriate, fixed penalty notices will be considered when a pupil reaches the national threshold (*Working together to improve school attendance*,

paragraph 180). In all cases the school will follow the [Hertfordshire County Council Code of Conduct](#).

For a summary of how the school responds to persistent absenteeism, please see the table in Appendix 1

9. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at The Reddings are:

- Gates open: **8.40am**
- Registration starts: **8.50am**
- Registration closes: **9.10am**
- End of the school day: **3.15pm**

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at **8.40am** when children can begin to come into school
- Registers are taken at **8.50am**
- Children arriving after **8.50am** are required to come into school via the school office
- At **9.10am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns

If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with a member of SLT, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate both class and individual punctuality. Unauthorised lateness could result in the school seeking advice and guidance from the Local Authority.

10. Review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the Head Teacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

This policy will be drawn to the attention of parents on a termly basis, particularly the details of Fixed Penalty Notices.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every four years or earlier if deemed necessary.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)
- [Attendance guidance - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning \(\[thegrid.org.uk\]\(http://thegrid.org.uk\)\)](#)

- [Hertfordshire Penalty Notice Code of Conduct](#) (Unauthorised absence)
- [Hertfordshire Penalty Notice Code of Conduct](#) (Holidays)

12. Appendix 1 – Summary of procedures for absences

Overall attendance below 96%	Leave of absence requests will not be authorised by the headteacher except in the case of bereavement in the pupil's immediate family.
Attendance drops below 90% for the half term	As above plus: Meeting with parents and attendance champion Letter sent home Attendance Officer informed Proof required for all medical absences
Attendance drops below 90% for the term	As above plus: Attendance Improvement Contract considered
Attendance below 90% for 2 terms	As above plus Attendance Officer informed Meeting with parents and attendance champion Notice To Improve may be issued
Attendance below 90% for the year	Penalty notice considered.
10 unauthorised absences in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (Government threshold)	Penalty notice considered. Unauthorised absences due to holidays that meet the threshold during term time will result in a fixed penalty notice being applied for.
10 consecutive or irregular days unauthorised absence	Herts Area Attendance Duty Team informed

While this is a summary of actions the school will usually take, all of the options specified in the statutory guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) will be considered, working in line with [Hertfordshire County Council Guidance](#).

13. Appendix 2 – Attendance codes descriptions and meanings

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present

\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Attending any other approved educational activity Where schools use code B, they must also record the nature of the educational activity.	Attending an Approved Education Activity
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance.	Authorised absence
C2	Absent with leave, of compulsory school age and temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend.	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. present at another school or PRU)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.	Authorised absence
K	Attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by LA (under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014) Where schools use code K, they must also record the nature of the educational activity.	Attending an Approved Educational Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of lack of access arrangements	Not counted as a possible attendance
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence

S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	Unable to attend because of any other avoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other avoidable cause (Where schools use code Y7, they must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause)	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Detailed advice on the use of these registration codes can be found at:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)