

# Ravensbury Community School

## Section One : Introduction

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## Section One

### Introduction/Our Mission statement

Good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the skills, which will equip them for life. At Ravensbury Community School we expect full and punctual attendance from all of our pupils. This is a requirement in law as parents who register their child at a school have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis.

Beyond this legal duty, we know that the rich curriculum offered by Ravensbury is based on continuity and progression in pupil learning. Attendance is always linked to performance and progress, so any absence from school will adversely affect the pupil's own ability to participate and benefit from the learning programme.

The school has an attendance policy and its aim is to provide a framework in which children, staff and parents can work together. Our school celebrates achievement, and attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils. Good attendance is an achievement and will be recognised with awards such as certificates and prizes. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. All staff will encourage punctuality and good attendance and will liaise with home and other agencies about a child's attendance when this is appropriate

Beyond life in school, key skills and attributes required by adults are reliable attendance and punctuality during their working life. Research shows that pupils with poor attendance at school very rarely achieve the high attendance standards expected by further and higher education and by the world of work.

We believe attendance and punctuality improve when there is a careful balance of three inter-related aspects:

### High Expectations

The perceptions of pupils and parents in relation to school and their personal experiences will have an effect on how both respond to the requirements of attendance. Having high expectations for attendance among all members of the school community is key to our long term success and ongoing improvement. Ravensbury Community School along with parents and pupils throughout the Foundation Stage will promote a culture of attendance from the earliest age.

### Curriculum

The provision of a stimulating curriculum for the needs of all pupils is essential. The school's dynamic approach to enriching the curriculum and the quality of teachers delivering the curriculum ensure this provision year on year.

### Procedures

These are agreed and must be made clear to all, and then applied in a consistent and fair way. This work will be underpinned by a rigorous attention to detail and be reinforced by constant use of agreed procedures and letters.

## Section Two

Our expectations for good and outstanding **attendance**

<b>98%-100%</b>	Purple-Excellent attendance- This will significantly help with a pupils achievement and attainment and life in school. This gives pupils a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic
<b>96%-97%</b>	Green-Good attendance-This is a solid platform to build upon and pupils should aspire to improve. This is in line with National average.
<b>90%-95%</b>	Yellow-Poor attendance-Pupils with this level of attendance are below the national average for attendance which may begin to affect their attainment and progress at school. It may also begin to impact on relationships with their peers.
<b>85%-89%</b>	Orange- Absence is a serious concern- This level of absence is highly likely to affect attainment and progress at school, as well as relationships with their peers.
<b>Below 85%</b>	Red – High Risk- Absence at 85% is classified as Persistent Absence. Absence is a serious concern. It is significantly affecting progress and learning. It is unacceptable within the schools expectations and targeted support and strategies are immediately put in place for improvement.

### **Promoting Regular attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility- parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To help us all to focus on this we will:

#### **With Parents and carers**

Parents and carers will receive regular updates on school attendance in our newsletters and display on the website

The school will send termly attendance reports to parents and carers

Parents and carers will be contacted where there are concerns about their child's attendance

Parents and carers will be offered support and guidance to improve their child's attendance

Parents will be sent acknowledgement slips when their child has made a positive impact and where attendance has improved following the 3 weekly attendance data trawl.

There will be termly punctuality and attendance draws for the most improved pupil.

#### **With Pupils**

Pupils with good and outstanding attendance will be rewarded with house points and the weekly the Attendance Cup

Pupils with good and outstanding attendance will receive an attendance bug every half term

Pupils with 100% attendance will be awarded Bronze, Silver and Gold badges at termly whole school assemblies

Pupils with good and outstanding attendance will awarded certificates at termly whole school assemblies.

Older pupils will be given individual incentives to improve their attendance and punctuality (stickers, personal targets, positive staff intervention etc).

Pupils with outstanding, good and **improving** attendance will be rewarded with outings and events

#### **With staff**

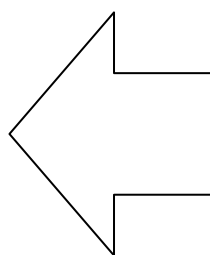
Where positive impact is required all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctuality and acknowledge the effort the child has made. In some cases there may be individual targets in place. See distributed leadership grid.

## School Procedures for Absence

If a pupil is absent from school the parent or carer must:

1. Telephone the **school office** on the first day of absence to report their child's absence and give the reason. This must be done before 9.30 am. Parents may call into the school and report to reception.
2. If the child is absent from school for subsequent days then the parent must contact the school on a daily basis.
3. If the child continues to be absent from school with a medical condition or illness the parent must present evidence that medical attention has been sought.

If the parent follows the correct procedures as outlined above this will be recorded as an authorised absence. Evidence may be required in some cases.



### Authorised absence

An absence is authorised when a child has been absent from school for a valid reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer.

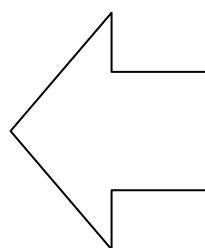
Only the school can only authorise and absence.

If no contact is received from the parent or carer about a pupil absent from school on the first morning of absence the school will:

1. Contact the parent by telephone or text asking them to contact the school.
2. If no contact is made, the PSA will call at the house. If still no contact can be made with parents a slip will be posted asking the parent to contact the school within the next 24hrs.
3. **If no contact is made this is recorded as an unauthorised absence.**

### Unauthorised absences may include some of the followinginclude:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absence which have been properly explained
- Leave of absence not agreed
- Illnesses where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping including uniform and shoes or waiting for their uniform to dry



### Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school and the law consider unreasonable and for which no authorisation has been given.

- A pupil's or family members birthday
- Pupils report that "parents could not get up"
- Day trips
- Extended appointments
- Illness of a sibling

### **Managing absence**

A school day is calculated as two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. As explained above attendance below 95% is considered to be poor. Attendance between 90 and 95% is classified as yellow and attendance between 86-89% is classed as orange and attendance below 86% is classified as red. If a child's attendance falls into any of these three categories it will be carefully monitored and appropriate actions taken. Of course the school recognises that pupils may suffer from short term illnesses or ongoing medical conditions which have been confirmed by medical professionals and such absences will be authorised by the school.

In the last week of every half term the school holds an attendance and punctuality review. Each child's attendance will be RAG'd as purple, green, yellow, orange or red. The following procedures will take place accordingly:

#### **Purple -No concerns**

#### **Green -No concerns but pupils should aspire to improve**

For these pupils in the purple and green band attendance be will be celebrated and pupil's will receive rewards as outlined earlier. Pupils in the green band will be encouraged to improve.

#### **Yellow/Orange/Red (Attendance concerns)**

#### **Authorised absence**

Each pupil is considered on an individual basis as to whether they are entered onto the **Pupils Causing Concern** yellow, orange or red list.

This will be dependent upon:

- Whether there has been a noted and exceptional reason for absence e.g. operation
- A possible authorised absence
- Last half terms attendance figures

If a child's attendance falls into yellow (90-95%) category and have been placed on the schools pupil causing concern list, the school is becoming concerned about the child's attendance. Absence will now begin to affect attainment and progress at school and will have impact on the pupil's relationships too.

Procedures for managing and improving this attendance are outlined on the procedure map in appendix.

Positive reinforcement to improve attendance will be used as a strategy to engage pupils with positive rewards. Parents will be sent letter A (appendix) drawing the parents attention to the fact that their

child's attendance is below the expected level. Parents are invited into school to meet with the PSA to discuss whether any school support systems can be put in place to help them.

### **Unauthorised absence**

If any of these absences are **unauthorised** the school will take the following steps:

1. First recorded unauthorised absence. School will make it clear to the parents either through face to face contact, a telephone call or visit from PSA, who will leave a letter saying she has called (Letter B appendix), that there has an unauthorised absence. If this happens again parents will be asked in to meet with the Headteacher. If still no contact is made the PSA will leave letter C (appendix )
2. Second recorded unauthorised absence.) be asked to attend a formal meeting with the Headteacher outlining the concerns about their child's unauthorised attendance and if this happens again they will receive a letter from school telling them that the school is actively monitoring the child's attendance.
3. Third unauthorised absence. Letter D (appendix) will be sent to the parents informing them that the school is actively monitoring the child's attendance and that if any further unauthorised absence occurs after this a parent may receive a penalty notice or a referral may be made to the City Solicitors to consider a prosecution.

### **Red (persistent absence)**

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 15% or more of schooling across the school year, this puts them in a high risk group. At this level progress and learning will be significantly affected. It is unacceptable within the schools expectations and targeted support and strategies will be immediately put in place for improvement. The school takes a serious view of this high level of absenteeism and the following steps will be taken:

- A key member of leadership team will be allocated to ensure support is available. The school will continue to offer positive reinforcement to pupils and reward improved attendance.
- Regular support from the PSA
- Regular meetings between the parent and Headteacher/Deputy headteacher
- Possible request to attend an attendance panel meeting with the Headteacher and member of the governing body.
- Close monitoring of pupil's whose attendance falls into the category of persistent absence.
- Attendance targets are set
- Possible CAF put in place.
- Action plan written to ensure that attendance targets are met as a result of the support and strategies put in place by the PSA.
- Formal warning letter to parents re possible statutory action
- Key contacts with external support agencies.

### **Medical/Dental Appointments**

Parents are advised where possible to make appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day and parents will be asked to show the appointment card.

### **Leave of absence in term time**

Changes in legislation 2006 state that

***Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.***

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. The Headteacher and Governing Body of Ravensbury Community School have adopted a zero tolerance policy on taking holidays in term time. **Only in extremely exceptional circumstances will applications be considered.** Your request will be considered and a decision will be given within two school days. If you do not agree with the decision, you have a right to appeal to the Chair of Governors. Appeals must be sent within five days and you will receive a response within two school days.

### **Religious observance**

On some occasions religious festivals may fall outside school holidays or weekends. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on a day of religious observance if it is recognised by the parents religious body. Parents are requested to give advance notice to school if they intend their child to be absent for religious observance. No more than 3 days in total in an academic will be authorised.

### **Legal Sanctions**

#### **Penalty Notice**

Ravensbury will monitor the attendance of all pupils on their roll. If five sessions of unauthorised absence occur the school will send parents a warning letter informing them that their child's absence will be monitored closely in school. If further unauthorised absence occurs after this the school may request the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice or instigate a prosecution.

Penalty Notices may be requested also be used when:

A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £60 fine is paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days of the date the Notice was issued. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Manchester City Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

#### **Prosecution**

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

### **Parenting Contracts**

(Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) A Parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly. The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions. Parenting Contracts

## **Section 3**

### **Our expectations for punctuality are:**

That all pupils arrive on time and are ready to learn. They must attend on time to be given a mark for a session. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their life and out in the wider. The school doors are open to pupils from 8.50am. Pupils are expected to enter the school building calmly and sensibly. They will be expected to engage in Sharp Skills in their classrooms until 9 am when the external and classroom doors will be closed.

### **School procedure for lateness and persistent absence**

Any pupil arriving after 9 am will be considered **late** and they will be expected to enter school through the Main entrance. Persistent lateness without justifiable cause is not acceptable and will trigger action by the school. The school registers close at 9.30am. Any pupil who arrives after this time without good reason will be incur an unauthorised absence. If a child is persistently late the parent will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and/or PSA. Persistent lateness may lead to legal sanctions.

## **APPENDIX**

Letter A

Letter B

Letter C

Letter d

Procedure map