



## REDBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Redbridge High School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Redbridge High School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 96%.

***As a school we define regular attendance as 96% or above.***

Redbridge High School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Pupils and all members of Redbridge High School community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and has been adopted from the Working together to improve school attendance guidance May 2022.

### **Aims**

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of pupils who of persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds a consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

### **Attendance Expectations**

Redbridge High School has to legally record every absence. A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence from school is required.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

The school acknowledges that the reasons for pupils not attending can be complex and will work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to support families towards achieving maximum attendance for the pupil.

## **Absence Procedures**

### **If a pupil is going to be absent, the parent/carer should;**

- On the first day absences should be reported directly on Studybugs either using the online version or the App or the attendance line (press option 1), **not** via transport assistants on school transport.
- Let the school know if a pupil will be late. Pupils will be registered as late if not in school by 9.30AM.
- Absence for medical and dental appointments should be evidenced by an appointment letter in advance and a copy kept by the Attendance officer.
- Pupils finish school at 3.15PM and should not leave earlier unless a valid reason has been supplied or where specific pick-up and drop-off arrangements are in place to meet the needs of the pupil.

### **If a pupil is absent, we will;**

- Telephone and text a parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 10.00am.
- If we are unable to reach a parent or carer directly we will make contact via the emergency numbers provided on Admissions forms and Annual Consent forms.
- School will try a minimum of 3 times to make contact through all contact points provided.
- If there are safeguarding concerns then a home visit will take place on the first day.
- In the event of no contact with parents, emergency contacts or via the school bus service on the first day and there is no response by lunchtime of the second day then school staff will then make a home visit.
- If there is no response from the home visit school will leave a letter asking the parents/carers to contact school immediately.
- At this point the pupil's social worker should be contacted if they have one.
- On the third day if there is still no response from anyone, to ensure the child's safety the Police should be contacted.
- If a pupil's absence continues, the parent will be invited to meet the XXXXXX and any barriers to the child attending school can be discussed and support put in place.
- If the parent does not attend the meeting or engage in any support the school has offered and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period, the parents may be issued with a Notice to Improve, in accordance with the Liverpool City Council's Penalty Notice Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the Education Welfare Service.

## **Leave of Absence in Term Time**

Governors of the school recognise that there will be special circumstances where leave may be requested and they will evaluate requests on an individual basis. However, we stress that regular attendance at school is even more important for our pupils given their learning needs and we would wish to see pupils achieving to the best of their ability full attendance.

Parents/Carers must fill in a Leave of Absence form and return it to school and each case will be looked by the Head Teacher.

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

Parents can receive a penalty notice for taking unauthorised leave in term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

## **Authorised Absence**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

If no request or explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.

## **Unauthorised Absence**

When the school has not received a reason for an absence or has not approved a child's Leave of Absence following a parental request it will be classed as an unauthorised absence. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school. Changes in regulation by the Government means that's schools can no longer sanction holidays in term time.

This type of absence may lead to the use of penalty notices or other legal interventions from the Local Authority. Redbridge High School, in agreement with the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Notice to Improve to parents (in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the Local Authority Code of Conduct) where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period.

The Notice to Improve period will cover 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time, the school will refer the case to the Local Authority requesting a penalty notice be issued.

## **Promoting Regular Attendance at Redbridge High School**

- This is everyone's responsibility.
- All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils.
- The Designated Senior Lead for championing and improving attendance is Mandy Hesketh, the School's Attendance Officer is Sian Cassie and the Link Governor is Koye Adebakin and Deborah Barkley.

To help us all focus on this, Redbridge High School will ensure:

- effective strategies are in place to deter poor punctuality;
- an engaging curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly;
- high quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school;
- pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to minimise disaffection from school;
- vulnerable groups are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored weekly by a Studybugs report to the Deputy Head teacher and Attendance Officer;
- effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided;
- parents/carers are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required;
- those pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the term are rewarded with certificates in assembly
- The school also recognizes that for many pupils their complex health needs can potentially impact on their attendance and the school in celebrating excellent attendance will ensure this cohort of pupils' achievements will also be acknowledged.
- 100% attendance at the end of the year is rewarded with a voucher.

## **Levels of Absence**

### **Persistent absence**

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they may be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school at the earliest opportunity to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parents are asked to contact the Attendance Officer Sian Cassie in the first instance.

### **Severe absence**

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education (DfE). This cohort of pupils are a priority group for Redbridge High School and

additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance.

It is essential that parents work in partnership with school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

### **Lateness**

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.

The school day starts and registers are taken at 9.30am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School recommends that pupils arrive by 9.00am.

- If a pupil arrives late to school parents will receive a 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 (Code U). If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register and there are no barriers preventing the child from arriving on time, the school may request the local authority issue a penalty notice.
- The official close of registration for Redbridge High School is 9.30am.

If a parent has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the Attendance Officer who will offer support to resolve the problem.

### **How we manage absence**

- Redbridge will monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families.
- Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic Redbridge High school will invite the pupil and parents into school to an initial meeting to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing.
- Redbridge High School will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Strategies should be established for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- We are also flexible to offer a whole range of solutions to enable pupils to access their education whilst meeting individual needs e.g. we can offer a temporary reduced timetable in agreement with the Local Authority (see appendix 1), partial remote learning and a phased return.
- We will ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Where barriers are outside of the school's control, Redbridge High School will work together to support pupils and parents to access any additional support from outside

partners (including the local authority or health services). They will assist or make referrals in a timely manner and work together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

- These actions should be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.
- Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.
- Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment (EHAT).
- Where engagement in support is proving challenging, schools should hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the senior leader responsible for attendance and may include the school's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings should clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but should also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

If a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists and the parent has refused or not engaged with support that has been offered, the local authority will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings.

Penalty Notices:

- Liverpool City Council (LA) on receipt of a request from Redbridge High school will issue a Penalty Notice to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child.

Before issuing a penalty notice the LA will consider:

- If the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period
- If issuing a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve the attendance of the pupil
- If appropriate support has been put in place
- Consideration of the obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 that would make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- Each parent who is liable can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually be the parent who allowed the absence
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil in the rolling 3 year period is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no opportunity to pay a reduced amount.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken.

This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions

The Local Penalty Notice Code of Conduct is published on Liverpool City Council's website

### **Removal from the School Roll.**

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

#### **As a school we are now required to:**

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register.
- Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- School must complete an [Exit form](#) (see appendix 2) and submit to the [CME@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:CME@liverpool.gov.uk) inbox.

Cormac Burke (Deputy Head Teacher) or Mandy Hesketh (Head Teacher) will complete the Exit form.

#### **If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:**

- provide the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing;
- If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Sian Cassie

#### **Appendix 1.**

Please click the link below for the reduced timetable

[Liverpool City Council](#) External online form

#### **Appendix 2**

**Removing pupils from roll – Destination Known**  
**Exit Form**

Complete all sections for all children leaving your school.

Note: students who move house within Liverpool need to remain on the roll of your school until they are taken on the roll of another school.

**Please ask all the following questions**

Child's Last Name:	Child's First Name:
Child's DOB:	Child's class teacher:
Name of person giving this information to school:	Relationship to child:
Child's address whilst at your school:	Forwarding address and/or school (as per DFE):
Names and DOB of sibling/s:	Name of sibling/s school:
Is the child leaving England?	Flight/ferry/other, details:
Destination:	Seen by whom?
Contact phone numbers for parents/carers:	Email address of parent/carer:
Any other information:	
Completed on behalf of school by:	Date:



**To Be Completed By School**

Information gained from conversation with siblings' school:	
Date safeguarding visit carried out to home address establish family have left the property:	
Visit completed by:	
Outcome of visit:	
<a href="https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council">https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council</a> Use the above link to identify the new local authority	
<u>Any Safeguarding concerns:</u>	
Contact made with new LA to inform them the family are now in their authority on:  By whom;	Social Care information:
Any other information:	
Completed by:	
On;	

Please return completed form to;

[CME@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:CME@liverpool.gov.uk)

**If you do not have a destination for a pupil you must complete the CME missing form.**