



Stockport

Model Attendance Policy

Reddish Vale Nursery School

Issue Date: Spring 2019	Review Date: Spring 2021	Version: 1
Signed by: Sandy Palmer	Designation: Chair of Governors	

Contents	Page
Introduction	3
Legal Framework for School Attendance	3
<u>Legal Duties on Parents</u>	3
<u>Legal Duties on Schools</u>	4
Absence from School	5
<u>Authorised Absence from School</u>	5
<u>Illness</u>	5
<u>Medical/Dental Appointments</u>	5
<u>Leave of Absence</u>	6
<u>Family Holidays</u>	6
<u>Other Examples of Authorised Circumstances</u>	6
<u>Unauthorised Absences from School</u>	6
<u>Late Arrival at School</u>	7
Roles and Responsibilities	7
<u>The Governing Body</u>	7
<u>The Leadership Team</u>	8
<u>Teaching and Pastoral Support Staff</u>	9
<u>Parents</u>	9
Managing attendance in school	10
Legal Sanctions	12
<u>Education Penalty Notices for Irregular Attendance</u>	13
<u>Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence</u>	13
<u>Parent Contract referrals</u>	13
Appendices	14
1. <u>Escalation of Attendance Interventions</u>	14
2. <u>A) Pre-Referral LETTER 1 – Initial attendance contact letter</u>	18
<u>B) Pre-Referral LETTER 2 – Medical evidence required/legal duties</u>	19

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The right of children and young people to an education is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in UK Law. The opportunities provided by education are fundamental to enabling children and young people to reach their potential and lead happy and rewarding lives.
- 1.2. Evidence shows that there is a clear link between low levels of school attendance and poor outcomes for children and young people. This is not just in relation to academic achievement. Poor attendance also leaves children and young people at greater risk of neglect, social isolation and offending.
- 1.3. At Reddish Vale Nursery we believe that it is vital that attendance problems are followed up at an early stage, and we are committed to doing so, in partnership with parents and the Local Authority. We will work with families to address any barriers to attendance and ensure support is offered which addresses any underlying issues.
- 1.4. Reddish Vale Nursery recognises that the causes of poor attendance are diverse and that all responses to absence must take account of the specific needs and circumstances affecting the pupil concerned.

2. Legal Framework for School Attendance

2.1 Legal Duties on Parents

- 2.1.1 Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. Children are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year in which they reach the age of 16. Whilst the children of Reddish Vale Nursery are not of compulsory school age, we recognise the importance of instilling good attendance habits from an early age.
- 2.1.2 Under section 576 of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), the definition of parent includes natural parents or other people with legal parental responsibility (whether or not they live with the child), and anyone who has care of the child.
- 2.1.3 For children receiving full time education at a school, parents must ensure that attendance is regular. Regular attendance means attending at every timetabled session required by the school. Non-attendance will not go unchallenged and parents are accountable for any sessions that their children miss from school for **any** reason.

2.2 Legal Duties on Schools

Reddish Vale Nursery is required to:

2.2.1 Maintain and preserve accurate registers as required by regulations (Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006) and make them available for inspection by the Local Authority. This includes:

- Monitor pupils educated Off-Site and ensuring that the school register mirrors the attendance information held by the off-site provision.
- Have clear procedures for the closure of registers during each session.

2.2.2 Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the school roll including ensuring that:

- Pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance.
- Pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 is satisfied.
- Information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the Local Authority in order to locate missing pupils.

2.2.3 Report Missing Pupils (pupils who are continuously absent for 10 days or more without reasonable explanation) to the Local Authority via the Children's Services Contact Centre.

2.2.4 Carry out all their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils at the school.

2.2.5 Promote good attendance and identify patterns of poor attendance at an early stage.

3. **Absence from School**

3.1 All absences must be recorded in the school register, and categorised as either authorised or unauthorised.

3.2 Authorised absence from school

3.2.1 Authorised absences are those which the school has determined are for a justifiable reason. This could be because a child is ill, or because of other exceptional circumstances. It is for the school, not the parents, to determine whether an absence should be authorised.

3.2.2 Illness

Parents are asked to contact school on every day that their child is unable to attend school, except where a doctor's report has been provided indicating an expected return date.

3.2.3 Where pupils miss a lot of school due to illness, Reddish Vale Nursery will seek medical evidence before authorising absences. Where this arises we will write to parents to inform them of this requirement.

3.2.4 Medical/Dental appointments

Parents are requested wherever possible to make medical or dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day, and whenever possible return to school after the appointment. The appointment card should be submitted to school as evidence.

3.2.5 Leave of absence may be given in exceptional circumstances such as family bereavement, or for other legitimate reasons such as an interview at another school or college. The absence should be restricted to the minimum time required and parents are asked to request permission in advance by filling out an absence request form.

3.2.6 Family Holidays

Parents are advised not to take family holidays during term time however as Nursery education is not statutory the Nursery will allow family holidays to take place. Parents must complete a holiday request form.

3.2.7 Other examples of authorised circumstances include:

- Part-time timetables which may be agreed in exceptional cases, for example where medical issues prevent a pupil from attending full time or as part of a re-integration package.
- Where a pupil is absent from school due to an exclusion.

- Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.
- When traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another school. In order to fulfil legal requirements, in such cases, pupils must attend school for at least 200 sessions in every 12 months.

3.3 Unauthorised Absences from School

3.3.1 Unauthorised absences are absences from school for which the school has not given permission, including arriving late at school after the registers have closed. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted as such by the school.

3.3.2 Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Illness where parents have been asked to produce medical evidence but have failed to do so
- Leave of absence for holidays or other reasons taken without the authorisation of school
- Waiting for a place at a new school

3.4 Late Arrival at School

3.4.1 AM Registration begins at 8.50am. The register will close at 9.10am; pupils arriving after the close of register will be marked as late (L).

3.4.2 On arrival after the close of register pupils must sign in electronically using the Inventory system.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities**

4.1 Reddish Vale Nursery believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

4.2 As such, the Governing Board will:

- 4.2.1 Support and hold to account the leadership team regarding its obligations in relation to attendance.
- 4.2.2 Ensure that the legal duties in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation are complied with.
- 4.2.3 Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to all school staff, pupils and their parents.
- 4.2.4 Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and ensure that that manager is allocated sufficient time and resources.
- 4.2.5 Contribute and participate in initiatives to promote good attendance across the school.

4.3 The leadership team will:

- 4.3.1 Ensure that the legal duties in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation are complied with.
- 4.3.2 Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required.
- 4.3.3 Respond to requests for information and recommendations from the Local Authority in relation to specific compliance issues.
- 4.3.4 Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents and the wider staff team.
- 4.3.5 Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance.
- 4.3.6 Ensure good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- 4.3.7 Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- 4.3.8 Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.

- 4.3.9 Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body
- 4.3.10 Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently, (half termly) to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- 4.3.11 Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Escalation Interventions (See Appendix One).
- 4.3.12 Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- 4.3.13 Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- 4.3.14 Ensure all interventions around attendance are accurately recorded and documented.

4.4 Teaching and pastoral support staff will:

- 4.4.1 Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- 4.4.2 Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance.
- 4.4.3 Contribute to the provision of good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- 4.4.4 Ensure that the legal duties in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation are complied with.
- 4.4.5 Implement the Attendance Escalation Interventions in relation to individual pupils (See Appendix One).
- 4.4.6 Work with agencies such as Stockport Family to implement strategies to improve attendance and to support pupils and their families.
- 4.4.7 Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- 4.4.8 Accurately record and document interventions around attendance.

4.5 Parents will:

4.5.1 Ensure their child attends regularly as required by law.

4.5.2 Ensure school has up to date contact information including:

- Parents' and pupils' addresses
- Parents' telephone numbers and email addresses
- Telephone numbers for emergency contacts
- Details of new addresses and schools in the event of a move away from the area

4.5.3 Comply with the school's absence procedures by:

- Telephoning school on every day that their child is unable to attend school due to illness (except where a doctor's report has already been provided indicating an expected return date).
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances and in advance in writing.
- Providing medical or other evidence in relation to absence if required by the school.
- Arranging medical or dental appointments to take place outside school hours wherever possible.
- Avoid taking family holidays in term time where possible.
- Avoid taking leave of absence for any reason without prior agreement.
- Raise any issues or concerns which may impact on attendance with school staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Attend meetings with school staff to discuss concerns if requested by the school.
- Work in partnership with school and other agencies to address any attendance problems.
- Encourage good routines at home to ensure children have good sleep patterns and are prepared for school each day.
- Take an active interest in their child's educational progress and instil the value of education and good attendance.

5. **Managing attendance in school**

5.1 Reddish Vale Nursery recognises that poor attendance is often a sign of wider difficulties in a child's life whether at home or at school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances which may affect their child's

attendance or behaviour at school, such as bereavement, divorce/separation, or incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support which may be required.

- 5.2 Reddish Vale Nursery will use the Attendance Escalation Interventions (Appendix 1) to ensure that every pupil with attendance concerns receives a red, amber or green rating and that an appropriate response is made to address the situation.
- 5.3 Reddish Vale Nursery recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance – for example, pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.
- 5.4 Reddish Vale Nursery will implement a range of strategies to identify cases requiring support including regular analysis of attendance data by the leadership team and governing body.
- 5.5 Reddish Vale Nursery will implement a range of strategies to provide support to pupils and families including:
- 5.5.1 Early contact with parents by telephone/text – school will attempt to make immediate contact with parents whenever a child is absent without explanation.
 - 5.5.2 Attendance letters – Reddish Vale Nursery will notify parents in writing if there are attendance concerns and offer support. Where the offer of support is not taken up and/or those concerns persist, school will notify parents in writing that absences will only be authorised if medical evidence is provided.
 - 5.5.3 Meetings in school – school will invite parents to meetings in school at an early stage to discuss attendance concerns.
 - 5.5.4 Home visits – school staff will visit pupils' homes to check on a pupil's welfare and/or offer support to improve attendance.
 - 5.5.5 Early Help Assessments – school will use Early Help Assessments to support families in identifying barriers to good attendance and attainment and put in place plans to overcome them.
 - 5.5.6 Team Around the School – After appropriate action by school and where internal interventions have not been successful, pupils and families requiring further support around attendance will be referred to the Team Around the School (TAS). The TAS includes representatives from services working with

children and families in Stockport so that appropriate support can be allocated.

5.5.7 Reddish Vale Nursery will also consider a range of other strategies to improve individual pupils' attendance including:

- Reintegration Support Packages – where a pupil has missed a significant amount of school a reintegration package can be arranged in consultation with parents and pupils so to ensure a smooth return to school.
- Part-time timetables – in exceptional circumstances where a pupil is unable to manage full time attendance a temporary part-time timetable may be put in place.
- Alternative provision – in exceptional circumstances where it is felt that a pupil's needs may be better served outside of the mainstream curriculum; referrals may be made to alternative education providers.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Escalation of Attendance Interventions

1. Introduction

At Reddish Vale Nursery we monitor attendance and put in place any course of action that may be needed to improve pupil attendance at school.

1.1 The following tasks in relation to pupil absence will apply to all pupils irrespective of current attendance level:

❖ Unexplained Absence

The designated attendance lead will attempt to make immediate contact with parents whenever a child is absent from school without explanation. Where it is not possible to make contact the attendance lead will liaise with the nominated Safeguarding Officer to agree on further action.

On the 10th consecutive day of absence the designated attendance lead will report the pupil as Missing from School to Stockport Children's Services Contact Centre.

❖ Requests for Leave of Absence

All requests for Leave of absences will be dealt with by the Headteacher/designated member of staff.

❖ Referrals to the Education of Sick Children Service

All referrals will be made by the Headteacher/designated member of staff.

1.2 Actions for Pupils in the Green Category

GREEN 90% to 100%

At this stage, with the exception of referrals to use the Education Penalty Notices system for unauthorised Leave of Absence (see above), all action is at class teacher and admin level and will be monitored by the Head or Deputy Head.

When a pupil is absent and returns to school, if their attendance is above 97%, all action is at class teacher and administration level.

This will include:

- Welcoming the pupil back to school
- Confirming the reason for the absence and recording as required in the register

1.3 Actions for Pupils in the Amber Category

AMBER below 85% attendance

The attendance levels and reasons for absence for this group will be analysed by the Nursery Development Worker and attendance lead to determine the level of need and in particular if the case requires monitoring only, whether communication with the parent is needed or if a package of support should be put in place to overcome a particular barrier to attendance. The Headteacher /designated member of staff will maintain regular oversight of decisions for this group of pupils.

The class teacher will speak to the pupil and parent / carer to:

- Welcome the pupil back to school
- Confirm the reason for the absence and record as required in the register
- Update the pupil on any work they have missed and supporting any catch up as required

In addition, the attendance lead will write to parents. The letter will:

- Provide details of the current attendance
- Convey the school's concern about the level of attendance
- Invite the parent to make contact with [Headteacher/ designated member of Pastoral or teaching staff to discuss attendance and how it can be improved (see Pre-Referral LETTER 1 – Initial attendance contact letter)

Attendance will continue to be closely monitored whilst in this band with further contact made with the parent at regular intervals discuss the progress until the pupil's attendance moves above 85.0%

1.4 Actions for Pupils in the Red Category

RED Below 70%

The attendance levels and reasons for absence for this group will continue to be analysed by the class teacher and attendance lead with additional input from a member of Stockport Family Team to determine the level of need and in particular if the case requires monitoring only, whether communication with the parent is needed or if a package of support should be put in place to overcome a particular barrier to attendance. The Headteacher/designated member of staff will maintain regular oversight of decisions for this group of pupils.

If not sent already, Pre-Referral LETTER 1 – Initial attendance contact letter shall be sent and the case shall be monitored as above to see if attendance improves.

If Pre-Referral LETTER 1 – Initial attendance contact letter has previously been sent, then the attendance lead will send a second letter indicating that absences will no longer be authorised without medical evidence. (Pre-Referral LETTER 2)

Where absences are not authorised, either due to no contact from the parent, or no medical evidence being provided following Pre-Referral Letter 2 being sent, further action should be taken. Depending on the reasons for poor attendance, the strategies already attempted and the parent(s)' willingness to engage with support, this could be:

- Referral to the Team Around the School (TAS)
 - When pupils with poor attendance are discussed at the TAS the level of absence and action agreed to improve attendance should be clearly written into the minutes
- Completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHAs) and commencement of Team Around the Child (TAC) process
 - When EHAs and TAC processes are put in place for pupils with poor attendance the EHA should clearly identify the barriers to attendance and the plan should clearly identify actions and interventions to improve the attendance.
- Referral to the Education Welfare team for Enforcement Action:

This may result in a Parent Contract being undertaken, where this is the case:

 - a member of school staff will be nominated to take part in the contracting process alongside the parent and Education Welfare Team member
 - nominated member of school staff will update the Education welfare officer of any absences on a daily or weekly basis
 - The nominated officer will liaise directly with the Education Welfare Team member before authorising any absences
- Liaison with education services, the ethnic diversity service or with voluntary agencies to access appropriate support to address identified needs.

Contact will be made with the parent on a weekly basis by a named member of staff to discuss progress until the child moves to Amber.

Appendix 2 Pre-Referral LETTER 1 – Initial attendance contact letter

Reddish Vale Nursery School
Reddish Vale Road
Reddish
Stockport
SK5 7EU
TEL 0161 480 6713

Email: headteacher@reddishvalenursery.stockport.sch.uk

Date

Dear parents of *****

I am writing to keep you informed of your child's level of attendance.

Currently ***** attendance is ***** which is below the level expected from our children. From time to time it will be necessary to keep your children home due to sickness however we try to encourage good attendance habits at Reddish Vale Nursery. Whenever possible please try and arrange appointments such as doctors, dentist, opticians and hospital outside of Nursery time.

Within the early years most important of all is the children's personal, social and emotional development. Regular attendance will ensure that all the children have the greatest opportunity to develop these very important early skills and become lifelong learners.

For any further information please refer to your copy of the Nursery attendance policy. This can be obtained from the office, or downloaded from our school website.

If you are experiencing any issues that are affecting your child's attendance or feel that you would like some support please speak to myself or a member of Nursery staff.

Thank you for your continued support

Katie Bennett

Headteacher

Pre-Referral LETTER 2 –

Reddish Vale Nursery School
Reddish Vale Road
Reddish
Stockport
SK5 7EU
TEL 0161 480 6713

Email: headteacher@reddishvalenursery.stockport.sch.uk

Attendance Concerns

Date

Regarding *** Attendance at Nursery**

Dear Parent/Carer

We are contacting you because we have some concerns regarding your child's attendance. Currently your child's attendance is *** and we would like to meet with you to support you in ensuring your child is able to attend Nursery more regularly.

The Nursery is committed to working with you and your family to improve attendance and we appreciate there may be circumstances we are unaware of. It is therefore very important that you make an appointment to discuss the matter further.

Please contact Katie on 0161 480 6713 to arrange an appointment

Yours sincerely

Katie Bennett

Headteacher

Appendix 3 – Attendance agreement



Stockport attendance policy for early years' settings

Reddish Vale Nursery Attendance Policy

*'Even when you are very small good attendance makes a **BIG** difference'*

Ethos

At Reddish Vale Nursery we believe in supporting good attendance at nursery. Children who attend the nursery regularly, arrive and are collected on time are more secure and better able to make the most of the learning and development opportunities that we provide. Research shows that regular take up of early education in a high quality setting has a long lasting impact on children's social development and intellectual attainment throughout school and later life. (Research brief The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education Project EPPE 2003) We therefore view good attendance and punctuality as vitally important for the learning and well-being of all our children. Positive relationships with children and their families is key to achieving this.

Aims

- To work in strong partnership with parents and carers to ensure that every child attends nursery regularly and is punctual.
- To provide a safe and comforting routine when children arrive, throughout the session/s and again when children are collected.
- To support all children and their families to establish good routines which will continue throughout their child's education.

Government funded early years education places (15 hours entitlement for eligible 2 year olds, the universal and extended 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds) are not subject to compulsory education laws which take effect from the start of statutory schooling at age of 5. However at Reddish Vale Nursery we strongly promote maintaining high levels of attendance in order that your child can achieve the maximum benefit from their funded hours (and any additional hours which families may choose to take).

Each member of staff will keep a register and record the time of arrival and the time of collection for each of their key children and provide this information to the senior management team.

The senior management and the staff team will monitor this information and any unexpected absences as part of our duty to ensure the welfare and safeguarding of all children.

(EYFS Statutory Framework 2017)

We recognise that sometimes families may need extra support to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality therefore good communication is essential between you and your child's key person.

As part of this attendance policy we ask parents/carers to;

- Provide up-to-date contact numbers and notify us of any changes of address or contact details.
- Ensure that your child attends the sessions agreed in your contract with the setting
- Notify the nursery by phone if your child is going to be late that day if possible.
- Notify the nursery by phone that their child is not able to attend, on the first day of absence and the reason for their absence. (Up to an hour following their expected time of arrival on that day if at all possible)
- Contact the nursery if this absence is continuing i.e. later that day/session if your child will be absent the following day.
- In the case of lengthy absence keep the nursery well informed.

Staff will;

- Follow up any non-notification in the event that a child is absent from nursery on the first day of absence by the end of that day.
- Inform parents/carers if attendance is low initially by letter.
- Speak to parents/carers informally if a child's pattern of attendance is low or if levels of punctuality are poor.
- Support strategies that will enable good attendance and punctuality to be maintained.
- In the case of a concern about the welfare and safety of child whilst not in attendance at the setting the child protection policy will be followed. This will be actioned for any child who is a Looked After Child (LAC) and for any children/families who are part of an Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Child process (TAC). *Concerns about patterns of attendance in these cases will also be shared with linked Stockport Family health and social care professionals.*
- In the case of persistent patterns of poor attendance contact the Local Authority in terms of the possible withdrawal of the early education funding.

If you decide to move your child to another setting then please inform us as soon as possible so that we can take them off our register and notify the local authority in the case of funded early education places. We will also ensure that your child's records and Learning Journey are forwarded to the new setting that they will be attending. This is essential to support the smooth transition of your child between settings and their well-being at this time of change.

PLEASE NOTE: The Local Authority does not allow movement between settings during a term time.

If you decide to move your child to another setting for the start of a new term, then please inform us as soon as possible so that we can take them off our register and notify the local authority in the case of funded early education places.

Agreement of parent/carer

Signature

date

Print name

Name of child

