Redbourn Primary School

Attendance Information Evening

15th March, 2023

Agenda

- Targets
- Jargon busting
- Rationale
- Timeline
- Details
- Feedback/Questions

Targets

- To keep whole school attendance above 96%

- To reduce the number of persistently and severely absent pupils

- To recognise consistently good attendance

- To recognise pupils/families with improving attendance

Jargon-busting

Excellent attendance: 99% or more (School Defined)

Good attendance: 98% or more (School Defined)

Target attendance: 96% or higher (School Defined)

At risk of persistently absent: 95.99% to 90.1% (National Definition)

Persistently Absent (PA):   At or below 90% (National Definition)

Severely absent: At or below 50% (National Definition)

Days off school add up to lost learning

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS IN A YEAR
175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments

190 DAYS FOR YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION EACH YEAR	10 DAYS ABSENCE 180 DAYS OF EDUCATION	19 DAYS ABSENCE 171 DAYS OF EDUCATION	29 DAYS ABSENCE (A TERM MISSED) 161 DAYS OF EDUCATION	38 DAYS ABSENCE 152 DAYS OF EDUCATION	47 DAYS ABSENCE 143 DAYS OF EDUCATION
100%	95%	90% Persistent Absence	85%	80%	75%
Good Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start		**Worrying** Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress		**Serious Concern** Not fair on your child.	

ISL Statutory Attendance and Participation Team

Rationale

Why are we changing how we manage attendance and punctuality?

- Current attendance statistics
- Mental Health, friendships & wellbeing
- Attainment & progress
- Ofsted requirement

Current attendance statistics

Total Attendance: 92.6% Redbourn   93.5% National   94.9% Hertfordshire

Authorised: 5.1% Redbourn   4.8% National   3.8% Hertfordshire

Unauthorised   2.3% Redbourn   1.6% National   1.3% Hertfordshire

Attendance figures include authorised and unauthorised sessions, so a child with 4 sessions of authorised absence will have the same attendance figure as a child with 4 sessions of unauthorised absence. The difference is in the process this figure will trigger.

Just over 20% of our pupils are 'persistently absent' meaning their attendance is 90% or lower.

We need to take steps to ensure this improves and that we are supporting and intervening earlier, to prevent the number getting this low.
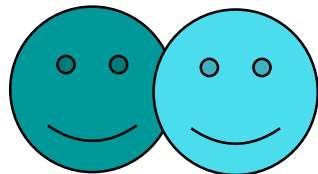
Mental Health, Friendships & Wellbeing
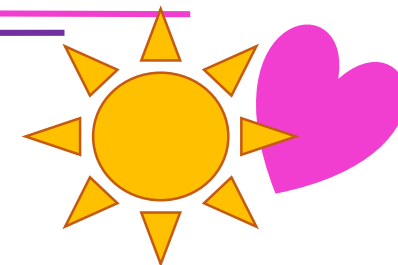
Ofsted highlighted and praised the high value we place on children's mental and emotional wellbeing at our school. We recognise the impact of low attendance on these vital areas of childhood development.

- Pupils find maintaining friendships and integrating with their peers more challenging, the more persistently they are absent or late to school.
- Secondary schools tell us that transition from Year 6 to Year 7 is more challenging and less successful for those with persistent absence at primary school.

Children with persistent absence, or who arrive late in school are more likely to face challenges with social exclusion, vulnerability to criminal involvement and resentment from classmates who feel 'distanced from absentees and let down if they were their project partners.'

(*Absence from School: A study of its causes and effects in seven LEAs. Heather Malcolm et al. The SCRE Centre, University of Glasgow*)

- ❖ *The same is true for pupils with poor punctuality, who miss 'free conversation' time and feel embarrassed walking in late in front of classmates.*

Attainment & progress
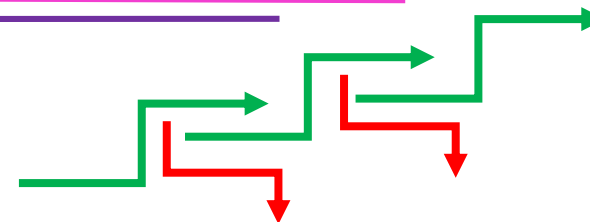
Our own data shows us that poor attendance and punctuality have a negative effect on the progress and academic success at our school.

- If pupils are not in school, they miss valuable instruction and support from teachers, so quickly develop gaps in knowledge and skills.

- The greater the absences, the more challenging it becomes for pupils to learn and achieve to the expected level.

Children with persistent absence are less likely to achieve expected levels of attainment at KS2 and beyond, to GCSE: 'Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS2, 83.9% achieved the expected standard compared to 40.2% of pupils who were persistently absent.' (DfE:*The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4)*

❖ *The same is true for pupils with poor punctuality, who miss vital components of the day such as: settling time; reading time with a teacher; group discussions; initial input into lessons; understanding of any changes to daily timetable and much more.*

Poor punctuality	Amount of missed learning	Total education missed
Arriving **5** minutes late each day	3 whole days of learning lost.	During 7 years at our school, this is equal to almost 114 hours of learning lost.
Arriving **10** minutes late each day	6.5 whole days of learning lost.	Equivalent to over a week's absence from school each year.
Arriving **15** minutes late each day	10 whole days of learning lost.	Equivalent to 2 week's absence from school each year.
Arriving **20** minutes late each day	13 whole days of learning lost.	Almost 3 week's absence from school each year.
Arriving **30** minutes late each day	19 whole days of learning lost.	4 week's absence from school each year.

Ofsted Requirements

Inadequate (4): Behaviour and attitudes are likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies:
- Attendance is consistently low for all pupils or groups of pupils and shows little sign of sustained improvement.

Requires improvement (3)
- Behaviour and attitudes in the school are not good.

Good (2)
- There is demonstrable improvement in the behaviour and attendance of pupils who have particular needs.
- Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.
- Pupils have high attendance, within the context of the pandemic. They come to school on time and are punctual to lessons. When this is not the case, the school takes appropriate, swift and effective action.

The judgement focuses on the factors that research and inspection evidence indicate contribute most strongly to pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes. For attendance this means:

➢ having a strong focus on attendance and punctuality so that disruption is minimised.
➢ having clear and effective behaviour and attendance policies.

Inspectors do this by:
o observing pupils' punctuality in arriving at school and at lessons.

o analysing absence and persistent absence rates for all pupils, and for different groups compared with national averages for all pupils; this includes the extent to which low attenders are improving their attendance over time and whether attendance is consistently low.

o Inspectors will recognise that the context in which schools operate has changed as a result of the pandemic. Therefore, they will consider the specific context and the steps school leaders have taken to ensure the best possible rates of attendance since the school opened to all pupils in March 2021. Attendance between March 2020 and March 2021 will not impact on inspector's judgement of the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The strengths in pupils' behaviour outweigh the issues with their attendance. Still, the current system for monitoring attendance lacks rigour. A pupil's attendance falls too low before robust action occurs. It is then difficult to improve the attendance to an acceptable level.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

Leaders monitor attendance, but their response to attendance concerns is not improving rates of persistent absence for some pupils. The more time pupils are away from school, the greater the gaps in their knowledge of the curriculum. Leaders should review their systems for monitoring and responding to attendance concerns, ensuring there is a systematic approach to resolving attendance issues and making sure pupils catch up on missed learning.

Timeline

October: 2022
Ofsted visit. Attendance highlighted as area for improvement.
Letters sent to parents highlighting attendance.

Autumn 2: 2022
Researching attendance policies. Letters continue to be sent highlighting low attendance or congratulating for improved or consistently good attendance.

Spring 1: 2023
Meeting with Hertfordshire Attendance Officer.
Updating current policy in liaison with staff, HIP & governors.

Spring 2: 2023
Parent meetings & feedback.
Further amendments to policy where necessary.

Summer 1 & 2: 2023
Governor ratification of updated policy.
Further dissemination of information to parents. (Personal calls where necessary)

September 2023:
Ratified policy comes in to effect (No back-dating to Summer Term).

Spring 2024:
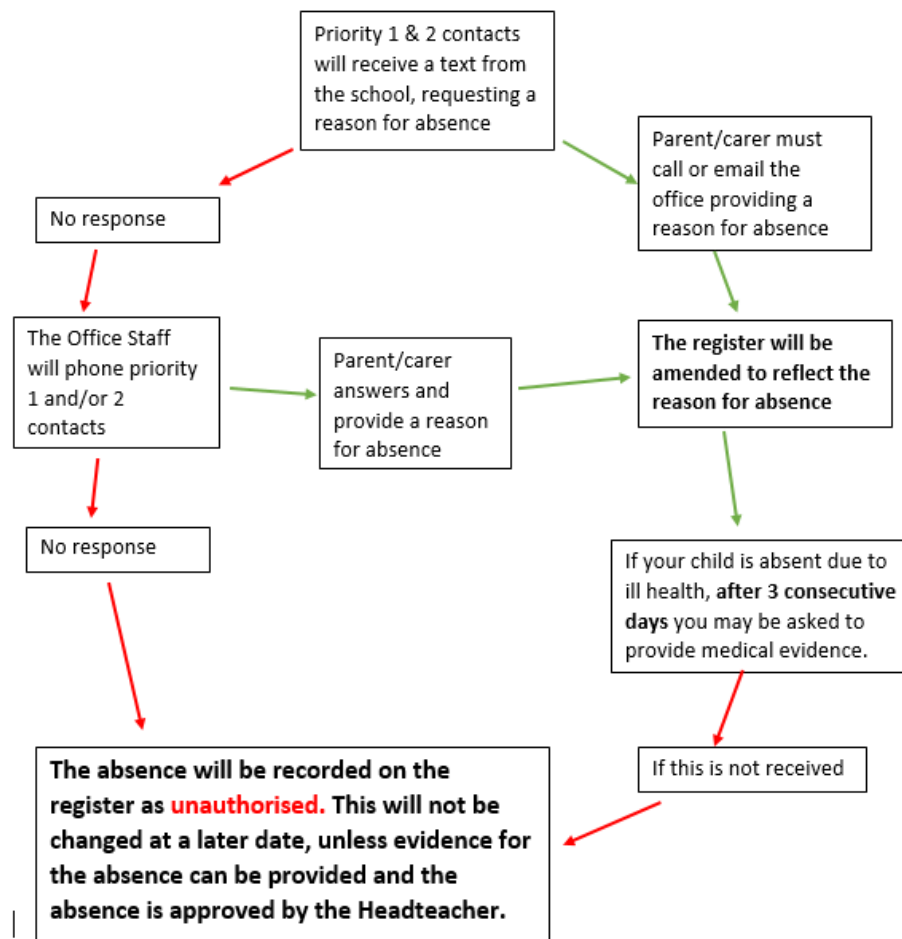'Two term' aspect of policy comes in to effect.

Details

(from draft updated policy)

A parent/carer must call or email the School Office by **9.15am** to inform us of the reason for absence.

If no contact is made by a parent:

Priority 1 & 2 contacts will receive a text from the school, requesting a reason for absence

No response

Parent/carer must call or email the office providing a reason for absence

The Office Staff will phone priority 1 and/or 2 contacts

Parent/carer answers and provide a reason for absence

The register will be amended to reflect the reason for absence

No response

If your child is absent due to ill health, **after 3 consecutive days** you may be asked to provide medical evidence.

The absence will be recorded on the register as unauthorised. This will not be changed at a later date, unless evidence for the absence can be provided and the absence is approved by the Headteacher.

If this is not received

Within current and previous term

(these do not have to be consecutive)

After 6 sessions (3 days) (Unauthorised)

Parents receive a warning letter and invitation to meet/speak with the Attendance Champion

If there is no improvement after 9 sessions (4.5 days - unauthorised)

Parents receive a second warning letter, along with the ISL (school) penalty notices information sheet. Parents must attend an Early Help meeting to discuss attendance improvement plan for their child.

If there is no improvement after 15 sessions (7.5 days unauthorised)

The school can apply for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to be issued.

10 Day Absence Reporting

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Section 12 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have 10 or more consecutive school days absence without the school's permission. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained absences.

When is absence authorised or unauthorised?

Only the Headteacher 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, of itself, oblige the Headteacher to accept it if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence.

If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered – or when no explanation is forthcoming at all – the absence will be treated as unauthorised and the parent informed.

Leave of absence can be applied for in advance. It is the Headteacher's decision as to whether this is granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application (parents cannot expect, as of right, that the Headteacher will grant leave of absence).

Absence will usually be authorised for: illness; medical appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours or during holidays; attending the funeral or wedding of a close relative (parent/grandparent/sibling); an exam held by external body such as music/drama/dance grading that cannot be scheduled outside school hours or term time.

Absence will not usually be authorised for: routine doctor appointment; dental appointment, optician appointment; hair dresser; waiting in for a delivery; shopping; a sibling being off sick; day-trips; long weekends; holidays during term time; tiredness; transport issues; any illness once attendance reaches 80%.

We recognise some children with SEN or significant medical needs may have additional barriers to attending school, or extenuating circumstances where absence will be higher than normal. Arrangements for children with SEN or specific medical needs will be addressed on a case by case basis, with reasonable adjustments made, and in tandem with discussions surrounding supporting learning at home where relevant, and in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Attendance Officer where necessary.

If you believe there is a reason why a trip, holiday or Travelling is unavoidable during term time, you must complete an absence request form, requesting consideration for authorised absence. Reasons may include mixed parental countries of origin or exceptional circumstances surrounding inflexible parental employment.

Genuine illness will usually be authorised. Where a child is regularly absent due to illness, you may be required to show medical proof for an absence lasting more than 3 days. If attendance reaches 80%, all further instances of absence, including illness will be recorded as unauthorised. The school would expect to be working with you at this point to support with attendance and any medical conditions your child may be experiencing.

Official periods of Travelling will be authorised, provided the Travelling is for work purposes and school is notified in writing of the start and end date for the period of Travelling.

How are we helping families to improve attendance and reduce un-authorised absence?

- ➢ Clear system for reporting illness and notifying parents when children not in school.
- ➢ Term dates and diary dates, including INSETs sent out well in advance to allow for holiday planning.
- ➢ Letters home, celebrating good/excellent attendance or warning of falling attendance.
- ➢ Where attendance is low, letters will recognise any improvement on previous terms.
- ➢ Flexible 'soft-start' drop-off.
- ➢ Morning & after school club provision on site.
- ➢ Clear policy with ambition to reduce term-time absence.
- ➢ School-based support offered by Attendance Champion, SENCO, Office Team.
- ➢ County support via Hertfordshire attendance officer and 'Early Help' meetings.

In school:

- ❖ Staff greet and welcome children at the start of each day.
- ❖ Staff promote the importance of attendance.
- ❖ A nurturing and caring environment.
- ❖ Strong focus on behaviour and values, helping children want to be in school.
- ❖ Broad, interesting curriculum to engage and interest children.
- ❖ Well planned, sequenced lessons where individual needs, likes and interests are considered.
- ❖ Staff notice when pupils do not appear themselves and step in to offer support.
- ❖ Trips and visitors.
- ❖ Range of clubs to promote attendance beyond 3:15pm (plans to extend clubs in coming year).
- ❖ Opportunities to represent school.

What we are **NOT** doing

- ○ Naming and shaming in class.
- ○ Attendance charts in class or shared areas.
- ○ Attendance certificates in assembly for excellent attendance.

- ○ Benefitting from any fines – these go to the local authority.

What are Parents'/Carers' legal responsibilities?

Parents/carers, whose children are registered at a school, are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school, every day school is open.

At Redbourn Primary School we expect parents/carers will:

- ensure that their children are punctual and understand the importance of good attendance.
- encourage a positive attitude towards attendance and send children in to school wherever possible, including when children are displaying symptoms such as a common cold, hayfever, sore throat.
- ensure attendance after an injury such as a sprain or break (meeting may be required with SLT to complete risk assessment)
- book any medical, dental, optician appointments outside of the school day where possible.
- only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- inform the school on the first day of absence, by 9.15am and provide the school with an explanation for the absence.
- treat staff with respect.
- work in partnership with the school and help the school to understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- proactively engage with the support offered by school to prevent the need for more formal support.
- If formal support is needed, proactively engage with this support to prevent the need for any legal intervention.
- call staff for help when they need it.
- Engage with online Arbor Parent Portal to monitor attendance record of their child/ren.

The online Arbor Parent Portal will help you keep track of your own child/ren's attendance.

• **Possible Attendance**: This number shows the total amount of sessions (registers) the student should attend for the current academic year.

• **Present**: This section shows the total amount of registers the student attended and the percentage of 'present marks' for the current academic year.

• **Late**: This section shows the total amount of times the student was late for a register.

• **Authorised Absent**: This section shows the number of times the student has marked as absent.

• **Unauthorised Absent**: This section shows the number of times the student has marked as absent, however, these absences were not approved by the school.

Recent Attendance for Riley Bailey

Statistics for Academic Year 2020/2021

Possible sessions	292
Present	276 sessions (94.52%)
Late	4 sessions (1.45%)
Authorised absent	10 sessions (3.42%)
Unauthorised absent	6 sessions (2.05%)

Recent Attendance (04 May 2021 - 11 May 2021)

Present	10 sessions (100.00%)
Late	0 sessions (0.00%)
Authorised absent	0 sessions (0.00%)
Unauthorised absent	0 sessions (0.00%)

Quick Actions ▼

Riley Bailey ▼
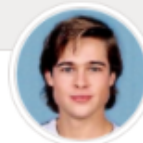
Riley **Bailey**

Form 11BR

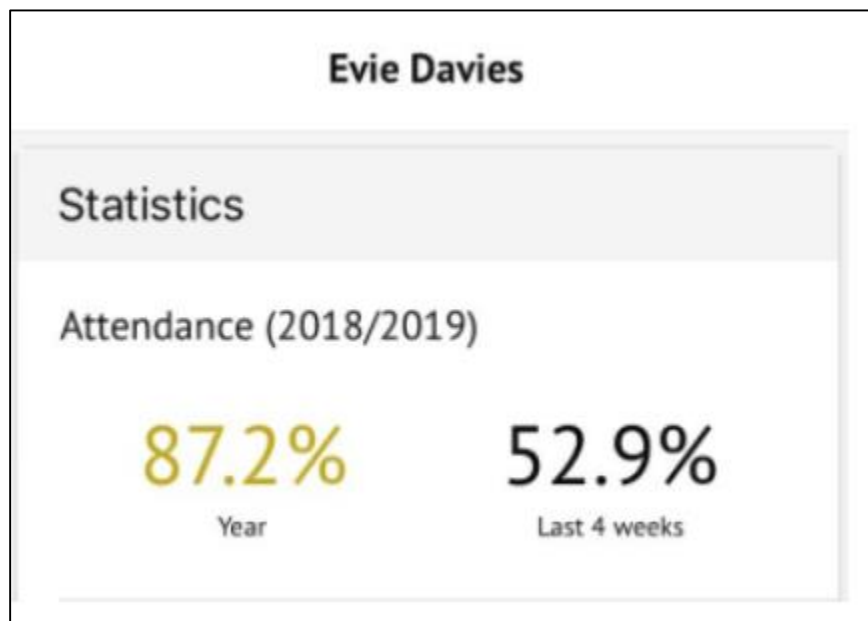View Student Profile

Attendance (2020/2021)
94.5% 94.5% Year 100% Last 4 weeks

Summer Term - Grade Average
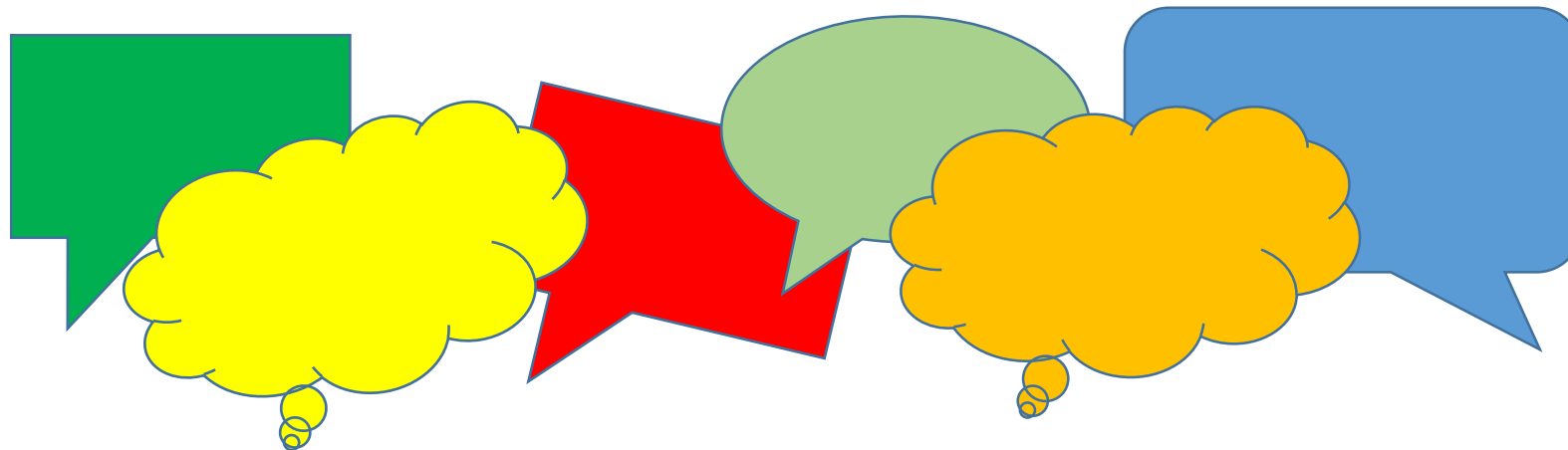3 Summer Term: 3 Previous Term: 3

Or you can use the Arbor App, where details are presented like this:

Evie Davies

Statistics

Attendance (2018/2019)

87.2%   52.9%
Year   Last 4 weeks

Links to join Parent Portal will be sent during the Summer Term. Please do not try to sign-on before then.

Recent Attendance for Evie Davies

Statistics for Academic Year 2018/2019

Possible sessions
359

Present
313 sessions (87.19%)

Late
8 sessions (2.56%)

Authorised absent
46 sessions (12.81%)

Unauthorised absent
0 sessions (0.00%)

Recent Attendance (13 May 2019 – 20 May 2019)

Present
0 sessions (0.00%)

Feedback & Questions