



Redwell Primary School

Attendance policy

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Local Committee

The Local Committee is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy

3.1 The principal

The principal is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to principal
- › Working with the Education Inclusion Partnership Team to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Sara Croot and can be contacted via 01933 676040, pastoral@redwellprimary.co.uk

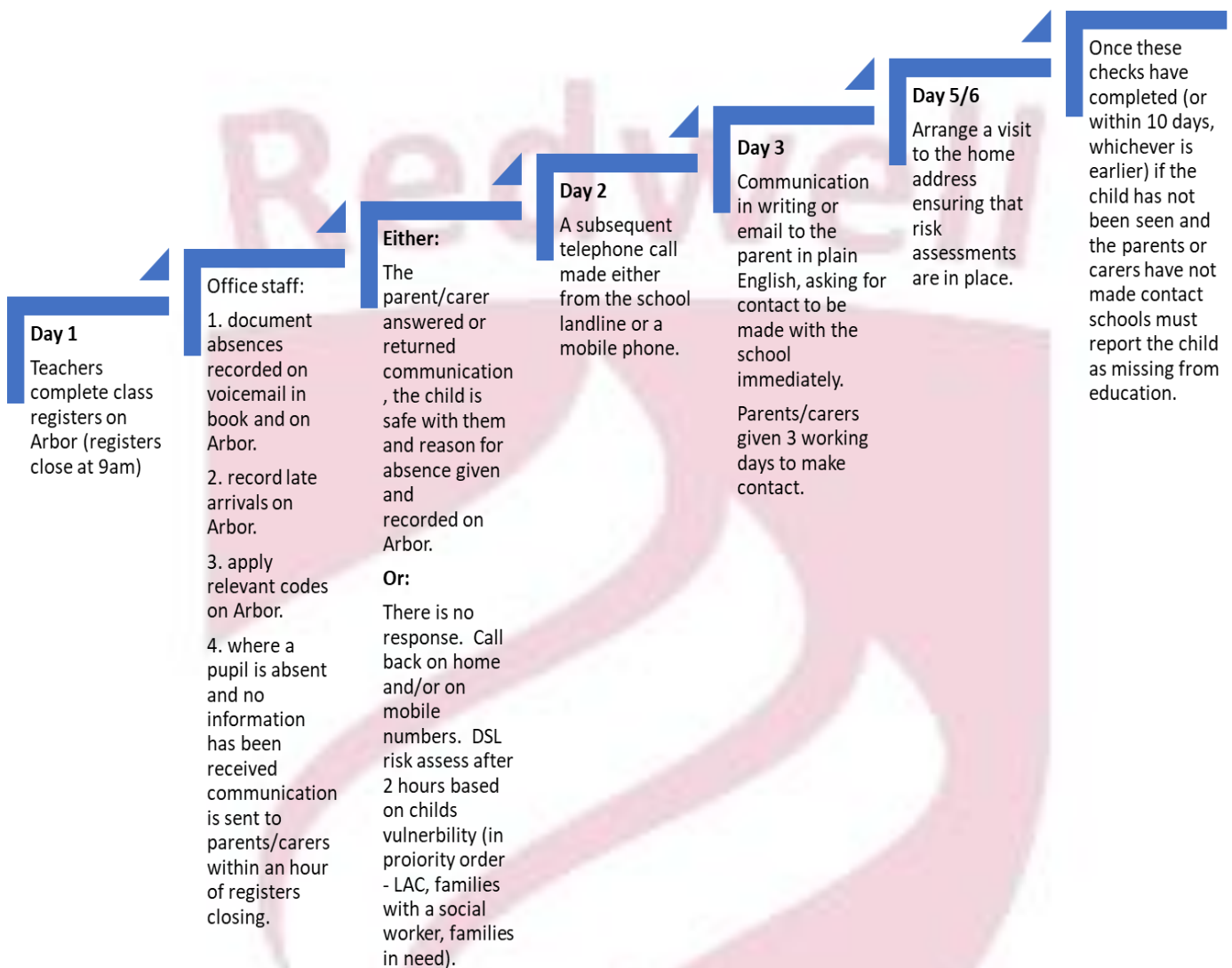
3.3 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis on Arbor and submitting this information to the school office.

- Registers open at 8.45am and close at 9.00am.
- After 9.30am absence will be classed as unauthorised unless appropriate information/evidence is given.
- Registers for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.00pm.

3.4 School office staff

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on Arbor using the correct codes.



3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register on Arbor, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents/carers can notify school of their child's absence by:

- Written note
- Verbal message to class teacher or office staff
- Telephone call or voicemail on 01933 676040
- Email to office@redwellprimary.co.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

- Parents/carers can inform school of planned absence by:
- Written note
- Verbal message to class teacher or office staff
- Telephone call or voicemail on 01933 676040
- Email to office@redwellprimary.co.uk

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

- Pupils arriving after 9.00am are marked as late.
- After 9.30am absence will be classed as unauthorised unless appropriate information/evidence is given.

Attendance and punctuality is monitored on a half termly basis. If your child is frequently late we will inform you of our concerns by a letter and offer support through our Pastoral Team.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach the pupil's parent/carer they will try to contact any other emergency contacts detailed on Arbor.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving MASH, police or Education Inclusion Partnership Team.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance concerns will be communicated on a half termly basis and full attendance reports will be issued in annually in the written end-of-year report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

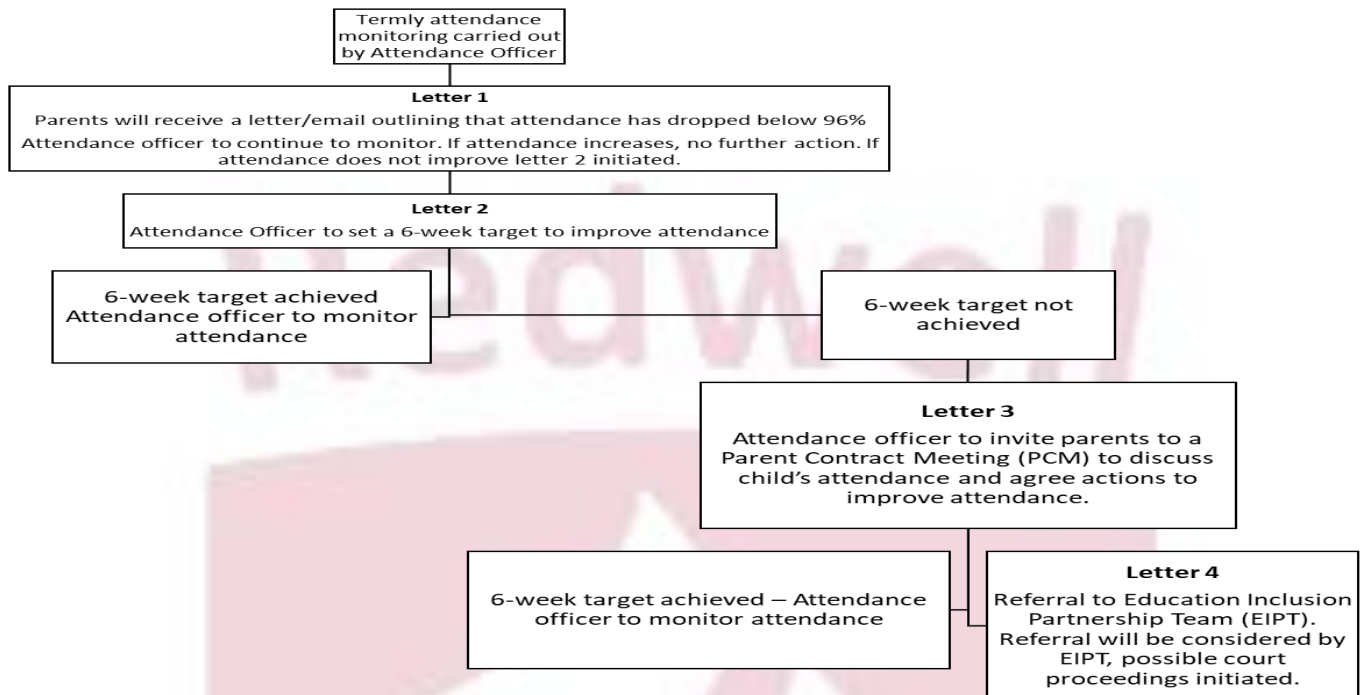
- Days of religious observance
- Attendance at external examinations
- Serious or terminal illness of a close relative/significant family trauma has occurred
- The leave would be of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child
- The benefit of the leave would outweigh the loss of teaching time

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence



5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Redwell Primary School attendance is promoted in the following ways:

- Celebration assembly, with a certificate awarded to the year group with the highest attendance
- Attendance figures are celebrated on the school website
- Certificates awarded termly to pupils for 100% attendance

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a half termly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2) and for each day consecutive day of absence thereafter.

Unauthorised third day absences must be reported by office staff to the attendance officer immediately. Staff use their knowledge of the pupils known history and use their discretion in ascertaining what action is needed in contacting the parents/carers and possibly making a home visit.

If we have concerns about a pupil's unauthorised or unexplained absence after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving relevant agencies.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the trust.

At Redwell Primary school we collect and store attendance data for internal purposes to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Inclusion policy
- Exclusion policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

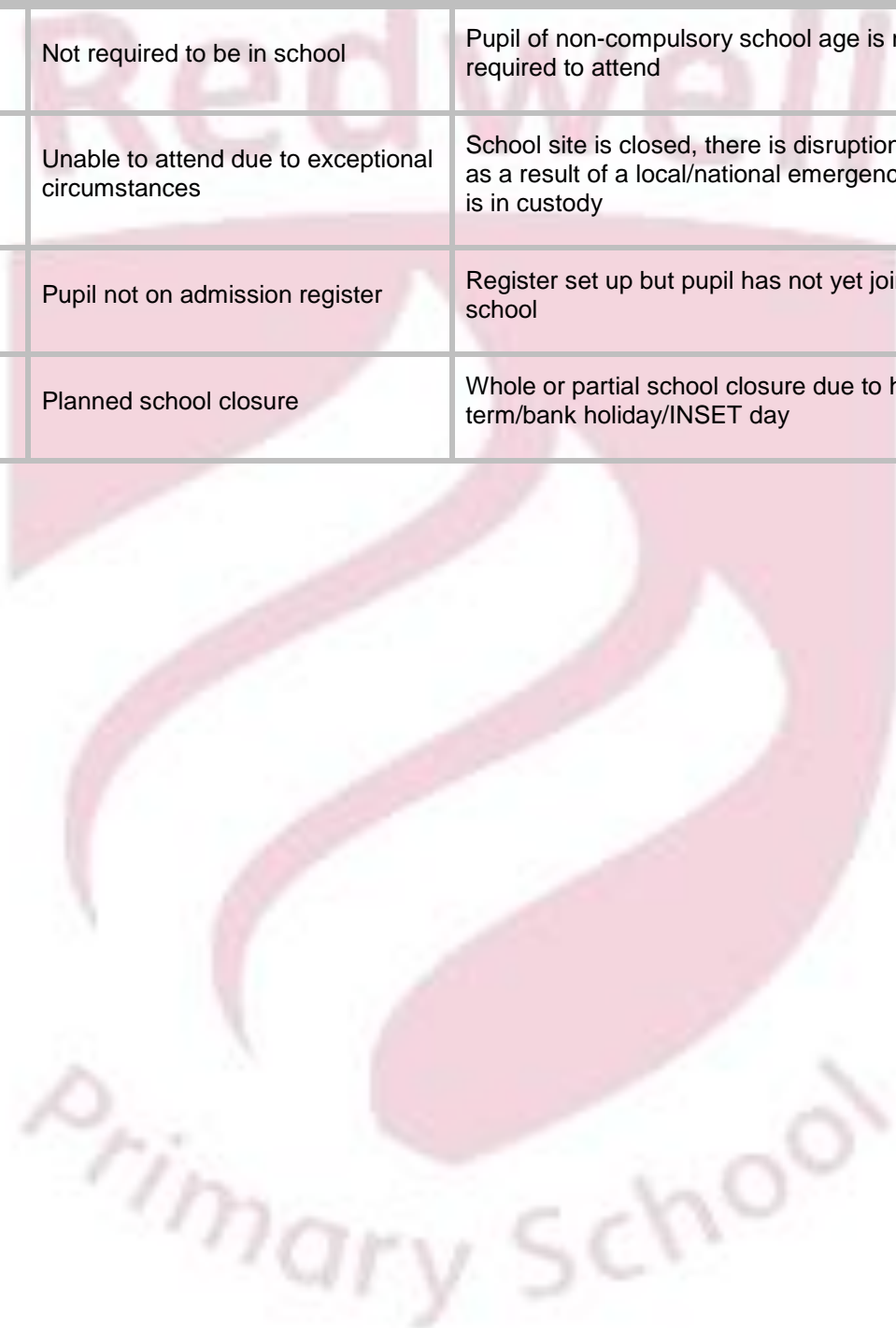
Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting

		activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day





EIPT

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to express our continued concern for your child's attendance. Since our Parent Contract Meeting /As you declined our Parent Contract Meeting your child's attendance has remained below our expected level of 96%.

Currently your child's attendance is....

We now have a duty to contact the Education Inclusion Partnership Team who have the power to prosecute parents for not ensuring that their children receive appropriate education at school or otherwise.

Kind regards,

Mrs Claire Head
Principal



Letter 3

Dear Parents/Carers,

Despite our previous letters your child's attendance remains below our expected level of 96%.

We are now inviting you to attend a parent contract meeting with Mrs Croot, our School and Family Support Worker, on DATE, TIME, and VENUE to explore the reasons behind your child's low attendance.

Whilst your involvement in any Parenting Contract is voluntary, you should be aware that, should your child's attendance remain below the expected level of 96% we will contact the Education Inclusion Partnership Team who have the power to prosecute parents for not ensuring that their children receive appropriate education at school or otherwise.

Should you be unable to attend on the date and time shown please contact office@redwellprimary.co.uk to reschedule.

If have any special requirements please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Croot on pastoral@redwellprimaryco.uk so that arrangements can be made prior to the meeting.

This is a positive step in supporting you to improve your child's attendance.

Kind regards,

Mrs Claire Head
Principal



Letter 2

Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to our previous letter regarding your child's attendance. We are now informing you that their attendance has continued to stay below our expected level of 96%.

As a result of this we will be monitoring your child's attendance for the next six weeks and expecting a significant improvement. We will be in contact with you when it is time to review this.

Please provide a reason for all absences otherwise we have no choice but to record them as unauthorised. Please provide evidence of any absences to include any doctors notes or professional appointment letters.

If you are experiencing difficulties in relation to your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Croot, our School and Family Support Worker, via the pastoral email address: pastoral@redwellprimary.co.uk

Kind regards,

Mrs Claire Head
Principal



Letter 1 - unauthorised

Dear Parent/Carer,

At Redwell Primary School we are committed to providing a full education to all. We encourage our children to strive for excellence. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of attendance is essential. Our expectation is that children attend school 96% of the time.

I am drawing your attention to the fact that your child's attendance has fallen below the expected level. Regular attendance is not just a legal requirement, but it is vital for students to maximise their learning and achieve their full potential here at Redwell Primary School.

Please ensure you are continuing to provide reasons for your child's absence and where possible any medical evidence to support absences. This can be either a doctor's letter, a copy of a prescription for medicine, or the prescribed medicine packaging itself etc.

If you are experiencing difficulties in relation to your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Croot, our School and Family Support Worker via the pastoral email address: pastoral@redwellprimary.co.uk

Kind regards,

Mrs Claire Head
Principal



Letter 1-authorized absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

At Redwell Primary School we are committed to providing a full education to all. We encourage our children to strive for excellence. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of attendance is essential. Our expectation is that children attend school 96% of the time.

This letter is a polite reminder that your child's attendance this term has fallen below the expected level. We appreciate that you have let us know of the illnesses however we have a duty to let you know that the figure is below 96%. We will continue to monitor their attendance and are in no doubt that this will improve over the next term.

If you are experiencing difficulties in relation to your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Croot, our School and Family Support Worker via the pastoral email address: pastoral@redwellprimary.co.uk

Kind Regards,

Mrs Claire Head
Principal