

Ravensworth

Terrace Primary School



Attendance Policy 2022-23

Establishing Progressive Consistency | Enabling Cohesion | Ensuring Coherence

*We believe in the worth and potential
of every individual.*

*We have high expectations and goals
for ourselves and others.*

We will persevere even in the face of obstacles.

We believe that everyone can succeed.

Together, we are winners.

Respect Independence Perseverance Kindness Teamwork

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School

Respect Independence Perseverance Kindness Teamwork



Attendance Policy

Introduction

At Ravensworth Terrace Primary School we promote excellent attendance and punctuality in order for children to reach their full potential. Good attendance is central to raising standards and pupil attainment and has an impact of the success of pupils throughout their lives. Good attendance also plays an important role in ensuring that our children are safe. This supports our role as a rights Respecting School with reference to Article 28 *'All children and young people have a right to a primary education, which should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of.'* and Article 29 *'Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.'*

All children of statutory school-age who are registered at a school must, by law attend that school regularly. Any absence from school can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning and have a detrimental effect on their future progress.

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School aims to work together with parents and pupils in order to ensure that every child achieves high levels of attendance and punctuality. We expect all children from Reception Class to Year 6, providing they are fit and healthy, to attend school 100% of the time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell. Improving attendance at Ravensworth Terrace Primary is a key aim of the school and individual absences and punctuality issues will be acted upon quickly and efficiently.

We aim to address attendance in a positive manner and always aim to celebrate success such as 100% attendance as well as recognising improvements in attendance. We believe that early intervention is crucial, and we therefore tackle attendance early within the academic year but also early in a child's school life with Reception Class non-attendance analysed, monitored and tackled alongside the rest of the school.

Ravensworth Terrace works closely with Gateshead Council's Legal Intervention Team and will inform them of any pupil whose attendance is a serious cause for concern. The Legal Intervention Team has a responsibility to consider what formal action to take following a school referral. This can take the form of a penalty notice, prosecution in the Magistrates Court, or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

School's Responsibilities

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School expects pupils to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. School will monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality daily and will inform parents if the child's attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern. School will work closely with parents and will offer support to families both at home and in school if needed in order to ensure good attendance and punctuality.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and to take seriously problems, which may lead to non-attendance. Parents should ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn. Parents that permit absence from school without a good reason commit an offence in law which may result in prosecution or penalty fine.

Registration

Schools are legally required to maintain accurate registers of attendance which should be taken twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991 which amended the 1956 Regulations introduced a further requirement that attendance registers must show whether an absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

Both staff and pupils should see the taking of registers as an integral and key part of the school day, as indeed was intended in law. It is essential that registers are accurate and up to date. Particular attention should be paid to accurate registration. Registers close at 9:15 a.m.

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent, parents are required to:

- Telephone school by 9:30 a.m. on the first day of absence otherwise the pupil will be marked absent without permission.
- Predict when they think their child will return to school if absent because of illness.
- Where absences are persistent, parents must provide medical evidence to explain the absence. If this is not provided, absences will be unauthorised by the school.
- Complete leave of absence form at least two weeks in advance for any planned absence. (Leave of absence forms are available from the school office and website.)

School will:

- Make every effort to identify the reason for the absence and operates a staged response procedure.
- Contact parents by telephone if we have not received notification of a child's absence by 9:30 a.m. on the first day of absence.
- If no reason is received by 10:00 am, then a senior member of staff will visit the home address of the child to ascertain where the child is.
- If there is no contact made at the home address, the school will contact Children's Services, the police and other agencies.
- Request medical evidence for persistent absenteeism in order for the absence to be authorised.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Head Teacher when absence becomes a concern.
- Conduct home visits where appropriate.
- Refer the matter to The Legal Intervention Team if attendance becomes a serious cause for concern and school have exhausted all strategies to improve attendance.

Teachers are required to:

- Take registers by 9:00 a.m. each morning and at the beginning of the afternoon session.
- Ensure that correct registration codes are used.
- Ensure that children who arrive late are directed to the office in order to sign the late register.

Absence Clarification

Absences are divided into two categories

- Authorised (allowed in law)
- Unauthorised (not allowed or unreasonable)

An authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent, or has accepted an explanation afterwards or proof of illness (medical note, prescription, hospital discharge sheet) as a satisfactory explanation for the absence. It is the school that decides whether an absence is to be authorised. The school will then decide whether or not it will

authorise the absence. In cases where attendance is a cause for concern, school have the right to not authorise any absences.

Examples of Authorised Absence:

- Sickness/Illness (medical evidence may be requested)
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (appointment cards/letters will be requested)
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances such as a bereavement
- Fixed term or permanent exclusions (whilst the appeal process is ongoing)

Examples of Unauthorised Absence:

- Keeping a child off school because they didn't want to attend
- Keeping a child off school to take them shopping
- Truancy, whether the parents know or not
- Any absence without written or verbal explanation
- Any persistent absenteeism with no supporting medical evidence
- Family holidays
- Leave of absence where permission has not been granted by the Head Teacher

Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments

- Where possible, we actively encourage parents to book routine medical appointments outside of school hours. Leave for unavoidable medical or dental appointments may be given where confirmation has been received from the parent (either in person, in writing or by a telephone call) or on production of an appointment card/letter.

Punctuality

- The law requires pupils to attend school regularly and this includes arriving on time each day. A pupil who arrives late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. It can be stressful for a child arriving late into school and disruptive for the rest of the class. Punctuality is an important life skill. Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. Parents must bring latecomers into the school office to sign the late register.

Late Arrivals

- The school day begins at 8:45 am for KS2 and 8:55 am for Reception and KS1. All pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time.
- Any arrivals after this time must enter via the school office and sign in the late book.
- Registers will be taken promptly each day before at 9:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Registers close at 9:15 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
- A child arriving after 9:00 a.m. will be recorded as an 'L' in the register to indicate that child was late. A child arriving late after the close of registers at 9:15 a.m. may be recorded as a 'U', indicating an unauthorised absence for the morning session.
- Should a pupil arrive after the registers have been taken then they must sign in the late register at the school office.
- Poor punctuality is disruptive for the school, the pupil, the teacher and the rest of the children in the class. If a pupil is persistently late parents will be contacted to discuss the issue.

Late Collections

- Late collections will be monitored by school and parents will be approached if they are regularly late to collect their child.

Leave of Absence Requests during Term Time

From 1 September 2013 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Holidays do not constitute exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised. While leave of absence may be granted during term time, it is entirely at the discretion of the Head Teacher and it is not a parental right. The Head Teacher will consider each request individually before deciding whether to authorise the leave, decisions made in relation to whether a leave of absence request is granted (authorised) or not (unauthorised) will be applied consistently and equitably. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

If parents wish to take their child out of school, they must apply to the Head Teacher at least two weeks in advance of the planned absence, fully explaining the reasons for the request. Parents must complete a 'Leave of Absence' request form. These can be collected from the school office or downloaded from the school website. A copy of this 'Leave of Absence' request form is attached as Appendices of this policy.

On receipt of the completed leave of absence form, the Head teacher will sign the form indicating if the absence is authorised and the reply slip will be returned to the parent.

If a parent takes their child from school without permission from the Head Teacher, or when permission has been requested but not granted, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the school register.

Non-Attendance Procedures

School Intervention

School will analyse and monitor attendance data on a regular basis. School will be rigorous in tackling non-attendance.

School will adopt a staged response to poor attendance and punctuality.

- First day response
- Contact with the parent by telephone, informal meeting or letter to ensure they are aware of the attendance and/or punctuality concerns. Letters are attached as Appendices of this policy.
- Offers of support for parents - signposts to groups/networks/services that may be able to support the family.
- Home visits to meet with parents and discuss non-attendance.
- An invitation to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss concerns.
- Use of School Governors (including linked Governor for attendance).
- Completion of a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and refer to outside agencies where appropriate.
- Request medical information from parents.
- Referral to Legal Intervention Team which may result in penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

The school will:

- Provide a lively and interesting curriculum to meet the needs of the children.
- Display up to date attendance figures on the school website and in the main hall.
- Yearly and termly certificates will be awarded to 100% attendance.
- Weekly trophy for class with highest attendance, presented at Monday assembly.

- Attendance updates will be regularly included in newsletters.
- Annual letter to parents regarding the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils are taught the importance of good attendance and are encouraged to:
 - attend school regularly
 - inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absence
 - try their best to achieve termly 100% certificates and weekly attendance trophy
 - arrive at school on time

Role of Governors

Governors determine, support and review school policies. They receive termly reports regarding attendance and the attendance governor meets with the Head Teacher termly to monitor attendance.



Leave of Absence Request Form

Parents are reminded that permission for leave of absence will only be granted by the Head Teacher on behalf of the Governors in exceptional circumstances.

Name of Child(ren): _____

Date of Birth(s): _____

Address: _____

Year Group(s): _____

Destination: _____

Number of school days missed: _____ (**do not** include weekends or school holidays)

Reason for taking absence in term-time: _____

Have you taken any other leave of absence in term time during this school year? YES/NO

If YES, how many school days were missed? _____

Request for absence (give dates).

NB: If this absence request includes a ½ day, please state the collection or drop-off time applicable.

First day of absence: _____

Will return to school on: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date: _____

Contact Telephone Number _____

NB: This form is to be completed by the parent or guardian and forwarded to the Head teacher
2 weeks before the commencement of the holiday

Requested Leave of Absence for _____ Granted/Not Granted

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Head Teacher on behalf of Governing Body)

Appendix 2 Graduated Response Letter 1

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School



Mount Pleasant Road, Birtley DH3 1AY Telephone (0191) 4334200

Email: ravenworthterraceprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

Head Teacher: Mr A Ramanandi

Name
Address

Date

Dear INSERT NAME HERE

Your child INSERT NAME HERE has only achieved ?????% attendance from the beginning of the academic year until ??/??/??.

This is causing some concern as the Government guidelines advise that every child of primary school age should be achieving a minimum of 95%.

We understand that the majority of absences are the result of ill health, but we must ask that parents be aware that the school is now working closing with the Education Welfare Service who monitor all pupils' attendance in school.

It has been calculated that a child who has persistently low attendance of 90% throughout his or her school life will have lost 1.4 years in education by the time they leave school in Year 13.

This means that poor attendance now may have an effect on important exams that your child will take in their teenage years.

It is hoped that, with your support and cooperation in this matter, an improvement can be made to the overall attendance of INSERT NAME HERE in school.

Good attendance helps children to reach their full potential.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Scott
Administrative Assistant

Appendix 3 Graduated Response Letter 2

Ravensthorpe

Terrace Primary School



Mount Pleasant Road, Birtley DH3 1AY Telephone (0191) 4334200

Email: ravensthorpterraceprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

Head Teacher: Mr A Ramanandi

Name
Address

Date

Dear INSERT NAME HERE

We are very concerned about INSERT NAME HERE low attendance at school, not just this academic year but during NAME's time at Ravensthorpe Terrace Primary School. XXX attendance this term currently stands at ??% which is well below Government guidelines which advise that every child of primary school age should be achieving a minimum of 95% attendance.

THIS PARAGRAPH TO BE ADAPTED TO REFLECT SPECIFIC CONTEXT AND NATURE OF CONCERN

We are concerned as since NAME left Reception Class, when her attendance was 96.8%, NAME has not managed to achieve 95% attendance.

As a school we want to work in partnership with all parents and carers in the education of their child. It is hoped that with your support and co-operation in this matter, an improvement can be made to enable NAME to reach their full potential.

Please contact the school office as soon as possible to make an appointment with Mr Ramanandi to discuss any problems that you or NAME may have and how we, as a school, can support you. I hope that by working together we can enable NAME to have a happy time at Ravensthorpe Terrace Primary School where NAME can thrive and achieve their full potential in life.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Cassidy
School Business Manager

Appendix 4 Graduated Response Letter 3

Ravensworth Terrace Primary School



Mount Pleasant Road, Birtley DH3 1AY Telephone (0191) 4334200

Email: ravensworthterraceprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

Head Teacher: Mr A Ramanandi

Name
Address

Date

Dear INSERT NAME HERE

I am disappointed that you have not made an appointment to meet with me to discuss NAME's attendance despite a written request sent to you on ??/??/??.

THIS PARAGRAPH TO BE ADAPTED TO REFLECT SPECIFIC CONTEXT AND NATURE OF CONCERN

I am sorry that NAME is ill, but his very low attendance means he has missed a great deal of education. His attendance in Year ?? currently stands at ???% and his overall attendance at Ravensworth Terrace is XX%, well below Government guidelines which advise that every child of primary school age should be achieving a minimum of 95% attendance. It is understood that the absences may be the result of ill health but persistent or regular absence will only be authorised if medical evidence is provided. Failure to provide this evidence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Please see his attendance at Ravensworth Terrace Primary School year by year.

Reception Class	XXX%	Year 3	XXX%
Year 1	XXX%	Year 4	XXX%
Year 2	XXX%	Year 5	XXX%

Please contact me by noon on ?????????? to arrange a meeting or a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service that afternoon. They will monitor your child's attendance more closely.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Ramanandi
Head Teacher