

Robert Shaw Primary School  
Attendance Policy

Introduction:

Regular attendance is an important part of the learning process; it helps with the continuity of learning and aids understanding.

Robert Shaw primary and Nursery school encourages pupils to attend school regularly, recognising that their commitment to attend regularly indicates a commitment to make the most of learning opportunities. 100% attendance is celebrated termly, and each child achieving this is given a certificate and placed in a prize draw.

**Common Attendance Protocol**

Robert Shaw Primary and Nursery School Governing Body has approved the acceptance of the Local Authority Common Attendance Protocol.

**Setting Attendance Targets**

Targets for attendance for the academic year are set within the Annual Performance Review APR during the autumn term by the Chair of Governors, LA Advisor, EWS and Head Teacher. These are realistic targets based upon the previous year's attendance figures. Any targets not successfully reached are analysed and discussed with governors.

Every Child Matters criteria:

- Achieve economic well being

Aims:

- ❖ To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance to comply with the legal requirements
- ❖ To inform parents of attendance and punctuality issues
- ❖ To identify the causes of non attendance and take action
- ❖ To improve attendance in individuals, groups and school (so that no child is missing more than five percent of the education they are entitled to)
- ❖ To support teachers in their role
- ❖ To ensure that attendance is a whole school responsibility

The School Day:

- The school bell rings at 8:45, children are collected from the KS2 playground by the class teachers and make their way to their classrooms to be registered.
- The morning session ends at 11:45
- The afternoon session begins at 12:45
- The school day ends at 3:15

End of Day:

The school day ends at 3:15, and all children should have left by 3:30, unless they are staying for an after school club or have an after school detention (see Behaviour Policy).

Apart from the cases listed above children who are still at school at 3:30 will be recorded in the Head Teachers Log. If this occurs on 3 separate occasions, the head teacher will send a letter to the parents notifying them of the correct time to collect their children. If this continues a further letter will be sent in order to arrange an appointment with the head teacher to discuss the issue. Following this, should the child

continue to be collected late, a meeting will be arranged with parents, Head Teacher and members of the Governing Body. At this meeting, the parents will be informed that should the issue not be resolved the Social Care department will be notified.

#### Marking the Register:

Teachers mark the attendance register at the start of each morning and afternoon session. The morning registration time is at **8:45am**. The register must be completed accurately by a member of the teaching staff. The attendance is then transferred to the Sims electronic system. This then becomes a legal document.

1. A present mark is denoted by a diagonal line
2. An absent mark is denoted by an empty space
3. Parents do not have an automatic right to authorise their child's absence. The final decision lies with the Headteacher and governors of the school. To authorise an absence the teacher will have had notification by parents either verbally, by phone or letter. The school may ask parents for medical evidence to support the child's absence when the absence is frequent.
  - a. "I" denotes an authorised illness absence
  - b. "M" denotes an authorised medical appointment absence
  - c. "C" denotes an authorised, different circumstances absence
  - d. "H" denotes a pre-arranged holiday (no more than 20 sessions per academic year)
  - e. "L" denotes a late absence
  - f. "U" denotes late after the register has closed and is an unauthorised absence
  - g. All other marks in the register are also in line with LA and National guidelines.

#### Absence:

- Illness or Medical Appointment:
  - Parents/Carers must inform the class teacher/school office, verbally or by phone or letter.
- Family Holiday:
  - Parents do not have an automatic right to take children out of school for the purpose of a holiday. Each request will be judged individually. Approval should be sought by completing a holiday form before the holiday is booked. Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. If permission is not granted and the child is taken out of school for the holiday, a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Education Welfare Service on behalf of the school.
  - If a pupil is taken out of school for a holiday without the schools prior approval the parent/carer may be liable for a statutory penalty fine.
  - All requests will be considered in conjunction with the Education Welfare Office and extended periods will also be discussed with the Attendance Governor.
- Other Reasons for Absence
  - As with illness or medical appointments, parents/carers must inform the school of the reason for absence either verbally, by phone or letter.
  - Observation of religious festivals. One day for religious festivals should be counted as an authorised absence. Additional days should be treated as unauthorised absence.

The Head Teacher has the power to authorise absence beyond the reasons given above and may do so from time to time. Parents who request an absence for any other reason than shown above, should directly speak to the head teacher.

If notification of absence is not received, the school operates a first day of absence call system. School will contact the first priority contact by text message, requesting details of the absence. On a Friday, any unauthorised absences will be chased up and a letter challenging the absence will be sent home. Parents/carers are required to respond to all letters regarding attendance. If no reply is received the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Office.

Absence undergoes continual monitoring. At the end of each half term all parents will receive feedback and unsatisfactory attendance will be followed up through meetings with the head teacher and the Attendance Governor.

## **Lateness:**

The school register will close at 9.15

If a child arrives late to school but before the register has closed the mark will be recorded as L in the register. If a child arrives after the register has closed the mark will be recorded as a U and classed as an unauthorised absence.

Children who arrive after registration must sign in the late book in the School Office, with time of arrival and reasons for lateness. Children who consistently arrive late are monitored by the Head Teacher and the Education Welfare Officer, and parents are contacted regarding this.

Children with a late mark recorded for 5 times will have a letter sent to their parents notifying them of the lateness and of the correct school times. If the child continues to be late, a further letter will be sent to the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the issue with the Head Teacher and the Attendance Governor.

If a child has persistently late after the register has closed The Head Teacher may refer cases to the Education Welfare Officer and legal action may be taken.

We work closely with the Education Welfare Officer on our attendance and punctuality. School has daily contact to refer and monitor cases. We also have a meeting every two weeks to monitor registers and identify causes for concern, which may then be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

## Parent Meetings

Parents may be invited into school to discuss the attendance and/or lateness of their child if:

- Overall attendance is below 95%
- A child is continually late
- There is no improvement in either lateness and or attendance
- A child is deemed to be at risk of becoming a persistent absentee (PA)
- An unauthorised holiday is taken

## **Referring cases to the EWO when at risk of becoming a Persistent Absentee (PA)**

If a child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee (PA), having missed 12 sessions over 6 weeks or 16 sessions over 8 weeks, then a referral form will be completed and then passed onto the EWS.

## Persistent Absentees (PA)

Every half term, the EWS remote into the school attendance system. They pull off the attendance of those children who have missed a pre- determined number of sessions. (Equivalent to 85% or less) The EWS service will then contact the school and parents regarding the attendance. These are known as persistent absentees. In some cases a CAF may be opened.

Any further absences from this point will be dealt with on an individual basis and may not be authorised unless medical evidence is presented (Appendix 4). Any hospital visits/stays will be discussed and support signposted.

## **Immediate Referral**

Any child who has missed 20 sessions over a 10 week period will be referred to EWS.

## The Law:

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the 'parent' is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient, full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude.

Compulsory school age is defined as from the age of five a child should attend school from the start of the term commencing on or after their fifth birthday.

Section 444(1) if a child of compulsory age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school; the parent is guilty of an offence and maybe liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £1000

Section 444(1A) If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to do so, they are guilty of an offence and maybe liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £2500 or IMPRISONMENT FOR A TERM NOT EXCEEDING THREE MONTHS or both.

#### Missing Children

If a child is absent for a longer period than 10 days and the school has received no notification as to why, a referral will be made to Education Welfare and this may result in the child being taken off roll and placed on the National Missing Child Register. If the child then returns a new application for a school place has to be made in the usual way via school admissions.

#### Celebrating Attendance:

At the end of each term the school holds a celebration service, included in this is the recognition of children who have made 100% attendance. All children who have achieved 100% attendance received a celebration certificate. Their names are then entered into a draw and one child from each class receives a prize.