



Reeth Community Primary School and Gunnerside Methodist (VC) Primary School Federation

Attendance Policy

Aims, Ethos and Background

This policy sets out the procedures through which we manage and try to maximise pupil attendance.

Research shows that there is a strong link between good attendance and positive outcomes for pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

At Reeth and Gunnerside Schools we expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. To promote good attendance, we:

- Create a warm and welcoming environment
- Ensure that students feel safe at all times
- Develop a strong sense of community
- Offer a curriculum that engages and inspires
- Ensure high quality teaching at all times
- Encourage, praise and celebrate achievement and success

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

It is the legal duty of parents to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school. This policy is written with regard for the legal powers and duties detailed in the following:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

If a child is absent

Families are asked to contact school as soon as possible and by 09:00 on the first day of any absence due to illness. This information enables the classteacher to record the absence correctly in the school register. Telephone calls are taken from 08:30 daily and before this time an answer machine is available. Please provide the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child and the absence is unexplained, the school office will contact parents to ascertain the reason, as part of our safeguarding arrangements.

If arrangements have been made for a child to attend a medical or dental appointment, please contact the school office beforehand, enabling registers to be updated accordingly in advance.

Reasons for pupil absence will be accepted via personal dialogue, telephone, email and written note from parents. Pupils cannot relay their own reasons for absence. Parents can send a written note with a sibling of an absent pupil.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

As with every school, and in line with DfE guidance, we make a distinction between 'authorised absence' and 'unauthorised absence'.

An absence is classified as **authorised** when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if a child is unwell and their parent contacts school to explain the absence, it is recorded as authorised in the register.

Whilst we quite clearly would not want children in school that are really unwell, we all frequently work through minor sniffles and ailments and we encourage our pupils to do so also. We can make arrangements for pupils to stay indoors at break time if they are feeling under the weather.

Medical and dental appointments are also approved, although we ask parents to try to book these out of school hours when possible.

Absence is classified as **unauthorised** when a pupil is away from school without explanation or if the absence has not been approved by school.

Monitoring Attendance

Aware that good attendance has a positive impact on pupil outcomes, the Headteacher monitors attendance on a regular basis and reports this data to the Governing Body.

>95%	Attendance is positive and a cause of celebration.
90% - 95%	Attendance is reasonable but could be improved. School will contact parents.
<90%	The government currently classify persistent absence as below 90% attendance. The Headteacher will contact parents to arrange a meeting and support will be offered. This will be followed by close monitoring and if attendance does not improve, a referral will be made to the Local Authority.

Term Time Absence and Requests for Leave

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time without prior permission and agreement by the Headteacher. Applications must be made by a parent that the child lives with. Forms are available from the school office and the school website.

Parents are urged to discuss leave requests well in advance of making any arrangements. Ordinarily, parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss their application. Leave requests need to be exceptional.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as exceptional:

- Service personnel returning from active deployment.
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the organisation / company.
- Where leave is recommended as part of parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

This is not an exhaustive list; the Headteacher must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision.

Please note that:

- Leave will not be considered retrospectively.
- Leave will not be approved if attendance is less than 95%.
- Unfortunately, the fact a holiday is cheaper during term time will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

- Leave cannot be granted because of the educational merit of a planned trip.
- Parents must obtain permission before making any arrangements for leave in exceptional circumstances, otherwise the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Parents who take a child on leave in term time without the permission of the school risk being issued a fine for unauthorised absences.

Fines

Under the latest Government Legislation parents who take their children out of school during term time, without authorisation, may be issued a fine. The council can give each parent a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days, you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.

Review

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

Approved:

_____ Headteacher

_____ Chair of Governors

_____ Date



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APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt educational progress. Before completing this application form parents are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education.

Name of pupil(s):

I request permission for my child to be absent from school.

From To Total school days

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Please explain the reason for the application as fully as possible:

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I certify that the information given in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that checks will be made as part of the approval process.

Signature of parent: Date: