# Attendance Policy

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| **Approved by** | RET Board | **Approved on** | July 2024 |
| **RET contact** | Headteacher | **Revision due** | Every 2 years |

**RET** — RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST

## 1. Rationale

a. The school seeks to ensure that all our students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.

b. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment and ethos, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

c. All school staff will understand the importance of attendance as part of the student's overall welfare and will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

d. The school will establish an effective system to monitor, evaluate and review attendance ensuring support is given to those who need to improve their attendance and timekeeping.

e. The school will strive to build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding any barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them

f. To meet these objectives the school will use an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

## 2. Aims

a. This policy aims:

1. To set high expectations for students and promote and the benefits of good attendance/punctuality to students and parents.

2. To improve the attendance and punctuality of students (in particular to maximise the number of students attending at the school's target level or better).

3. To minimise the number of students who are 'persistently absent' (<90%) and 'severely absent' (<50%).

4. To ensure that students do not become 'missing from education'.

5. To keep child safe, recognising the need to link connections between absence and potential safeguarding concerns.

6. To make attendance and punctuality priorities for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers (including supply), associate staff, leaders and governors.

7. To have clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities

8. To provide clear routes of support, advice and guidance to parents and students.

9. To gather and analyse attendance data regularly, including benchmarking with local, regional and national levels.

10. To develop further positive and consistent communication between home and school

11. To implement an effective system of recognition and consequences that support the attendance policy

12. To promote effective partnerships with the local services and agencies with responsibility for improving attendance and wider student welfare, e.g. the Educational Welfare Service.

13. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence; This can be achieved by prioritising attendance in strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions or disabilities, safeguarding, wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged students including use of pupil premium and support for young carers and children with a social worker.

14. To provide additional support for pupils with medical conditions and/or SEND.

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**3. Implementation**

a. Registers – by law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an electronic attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

1. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The school will use the relevant attendance code (as indicated in the Department for Education guidance) to indicate whether pupils are present or absent. This data must be kept for a period not less than six years. Daily attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/share-your-daily-school-attendance-data

2. AM and PM registers will be kept open for a reasonable length of time and students will be marked as late if they arrive after the session has started and before the register has closed. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent using the relevant code.

3. Please see the school's website for information on when registers close.

b. Absence

1. Parents are asked to contact the school using the relevant system when their child is absent, giving an indication of the problem and when they expect him/her to return.

2. Relevant staff enter the absence on the student's register and relevant staff receive daily reports of absences.

3. If Form Tutors receive a note explaining an absence, they will pass the details on to the relevant staff member.

4. Any student unaccounted for by the end of Period One triggers an 'absence call', generally via an automated phone service that alerts parents to the absence.

5. Letters are generated at regular intervals alerting parents to any concerns with students' attendance and asking parents to give reasons for any unaccounted absences. These are distributed by relevant staff members.

6. Unexplained or unauthorised absences of two or more days are referred to the staff and contact home will be made, if necessary, to get further details.

7. Those students identified as a cause for concern will be asked to provide medical evidence for any absences.

8. Medical or dental appointments – absence from school for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parent/carers must inform the school before the appointment and can do so by contacting the school through the usual channels.

9. Absence in term time – applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

- The school makes it clear that term time absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

- Parents and carers wanting to request a term time absence should write directly to the Headteacher, explaining their circumstances; these may include: taking part in a regulated performance or attending an interview for entry into another educational institution.

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- Cases of unauthorised absence being taken may be referred to the Educational Welfare Service for further action according to local policy/guidance. This may include proceedings to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, issued under the National framework for penalty notices.
- The school is also able to make referrals to other external agencies that may have an impact on improving attendance. Where applicable, this may include social workers or the youth offending team.
- When a student has had an extended period of absence, it may be deemed appropriate to have a reintegration meeting. The relevant pastoral lead will lead this and may involve the Head of Year and other key professionals such as the SENCO, or Education Welfare Officer. The aim is to support the student's return to school and ensure that they have the best opportunity to improve their attendance and achievement.

c. Punctuality

1. The school recognises the disruption caused to teaching and learning by persistent lateness to school and lessons.
2. Where issues arise, lateness and patterns of lateness will be dealt with by relevant staff members, involving parents/carers, where appropriate.
3. Cases of persistent lateness may be referred to the Educational Welfare Service for further action according to local policy/guidance. This may include proceedings to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

4. **Monitoring And Evaluation**

a. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for setting a clear vision, and overseeing and reviewing the school's attendance procedures improvement priorities and training. At Turing House School this is: Niall Quigley (contact details: 020 8069 6100 or info@turinghouseschool.org.uk).
b. The Attendance Officer manages the day-to-day oversight of attendance.
c. Regular line management meetings with relevant staff members ensures effective communication and consistent monitoring of attendance and punctuality.
d. Pastoral teams monitor attendance of cohorts, sub-cohorts and individuals, being particularly mindful of students who are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.
e. The governing body is regularly informed of attendance rates, concerns, successes and plans to improve attendance.

5. **This policy runs in conjunction with the following polices:**

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Student Extended Medical Absence Policy

**Appendix 1 – Legislation and Guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the Working together to improve school attendance (published 19 February 2024 and applies from 19 August 2024) from the Department for Education (DfE) and the responsibilities set out in the summary table of responsibilities, 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- 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
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The policy also takes into account the following Department for Education guidance:

- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance