



Range High School

PUPIL ATTENDANCE + PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Person responsible for Policy: Headteacher

Date of next review: SUMMER 2022 – This policy is to be reviewed every 3 years (major changes will be brought to the governors' attention as, and when they occur)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY HAS BEEN DELEGATED TO THE HEADTEACHER

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Range High School is committed to providing challenge and support for all pupils to achieve their best.

High levels of attendance and punctuality are essential for pupils to work to their full potential, be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them at school. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly

Achieving high attendance is a necessity in preparing pupils for future working life as an adult. Pupils should be at the School, **on time and every day** that school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that parents and carers recognise the responsibility and obligation they have to make sure that pupils attend regularly. This policy sets out how the School, its partners and Parents/Carers can work together to achieve this.

1.1 The Importance of Regular Attendance:

Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence additionally disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring pupils' regular attendance at school is the **legal responsibility of Parents/Carers. By law, all children of compulsory school age must attend school.** Poor attendance not only undermines a child's education and future life chances but it can also put children at risk, can compromise personal safety and encourage anti-social behaviour. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1.2 Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a habit of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – Parents/Carers, pupils and all members of school staff. We expect pupils at Range High School to aim for at least 95% attendance.

To maintain a focus on this the School will:

- Report to Parents/Carers regularly on how their child is performing at school. This will include information about their attendance and punctuality.
- Celebrate good attendance in assemblies on a regular basis, through daily Tutor Time and by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through, certificates, events and trips, both in and outside of school.

2.0 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

2.1 If a student is absent, parents should:

- Contact school by 9am ideally on the first day of absence; the dedicated telephone number is 01704 879315
- Send a note in on the first day that the student returns with an explanation of the absence
- For absences that extend to a week (5 school days), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/copy of a prescription/sight of prescribed medication.

2.2 If a student is absent, the school:

- Will endeavour to telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if a message (that explains the absence) has not been received;
- May invite Parents/Carers into school to discuss the situation with the Pupil Support Manager (Mrs L Dillon) if absences persist.

2.3 Telephone numbers:

- There are times when school will need to contact parent for a range of issues, including absence, so it is essential that the school has up to date contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year and we ask parents / carers to inform us of any changes.

3.0 LATENESS

- Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If pupils are late at the start of the day they can miss assemblies, work, vital information and news for the day and do not spend time with their Form Tutor. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. Persistent poor punctuality will result in sanctions being applied e.g. punctuality detention and/or potentially a contract.

3.1 How we manage lateness:

- At **8.50** the school day starts and pupils are expected to be **in Form Tutor time** at that time.
- from **8:30** pupils can access the Dining Room (but should remain there until 8.40am when they can go to their lockers)

In accordance with the Regulations, if pupils arrive after **9.30** they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an **unauthorised absence**. This may mean that Parents/Carers could face the possibility of legal proceedings if the problem persists.

Parents/carers can use class charts to see if their child has been marked late to any lesson.

If a student has a persistent late record, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Head of House or Pupil Support Manager to resolve the problem. Parents/Carers can approach the school at any time if they experience problems getting their child to the school on time.

4.0 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCES

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the Parents/Carers), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.

Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks. Registers are legal documents so the school staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Attendance marks are also recorded at every lesson to monitor student punctuality and guard against truancy. Information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers, preferably in writing.

4.1 Authorised

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. Medical appointments, if possible, should be made as late in the day as possible to allow your child to be registered for the afternoon. Medical appointments should not take all day.

4.2 Unauthorised

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave of absence" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark. (**Registers close at 9.30** each day). A child arriving late after that time will be recorded as U (unauthorised).
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- oversleeping
- absent to look after an unwell sibling
- inadequate uniform
- confusion over term dates
- whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school.
- any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between school, parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, parents/carers should not condone their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending as this gives the child the impression that attendance does not matter.

5.0 EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE IN TERM TIME

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off during school term time to have exceptional leave. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

5.1 Holiday during Term Time

It is the school's policy not to grant holidays in term time.

5.2 Exceptional Leave

Authorised absence in exceptional circumstances

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1 September 2013, state that the Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Allowed absence in exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the Headteacher and in advance of the event). THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE:

- Family bereavement or close friend bereavement
- Other compassionate grounds
- Family wedding/civil partnership taking part on school day – not travelling to a wedding – unless it is abroad. We can only authorise a maximum of three days for trips abroad.
- Family crisis
- Examinations off site
- Educational opportunity – sport & performance
- Attendance at an event at the request of a public organisation
- Visit to a new school
- Family re-location visit
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays

Absences are not allowed under any circumstances:

- Family holiday no matter what length
- Family trips
- Leaving school early to travel to an event

To request absence for exceptional circumstances please write to the Headteacher at least 2 weeks in advance of the request with full details of the reason for the request.

If a pupils is absent from school the school may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices when the absence is not authorised. Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

The amount payable for a Penalty Notice issued in any of the above circumstances is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued. Please be aware that each parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents/carers and one child each parent/carer will receive one Penalty Notice. If there are two parents/carers, and two children incur unauthorised absences, each parent/carer will receive two Penalty Notices, which in this case would amount to £120 each if paid within 28 days.

6.0 PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA) [As per Government guidance]

When a student becomes a 'persistent absentee', the Local Authority has to be notified. This applies when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will do considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. The school expects parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this.

This could involve Parents/carers coming to an Attendance interview at school to develop an Individual Attendance Plan to improve the situation.

This plan could involve some or all of the strategies below.

- Multi-Agency Meeting (Social Care, School Nurse, CAMHS, Youth Offending Team, Young Carers etc.)
- Early Help Assessment referral
- Fixed Term penalty for Parent/Carer
- Educational Supervision Order (Magistrates Court)
- Prosecution of Parent/Carer. (Magistrates Court)

All absence is monitored thoroughly and regularly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. Parents/Carers will be informed of the concern immediately. We automatically inform Parents/Carers when absence passes 5%. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system. This is combined with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

7.0 PENALTY NOTICE PROCEEDINGS

Penalty Notices for absence from school can be issued by the Attendance and Welfare Service based on requests from schools. Range High School follows the most recent 'Procedures for Issuing Education-related Penalty Notices' from Sefton Council (April 2015).

The circumstances in which a penalty notice for non-attendance may be issued include:

- Parentally condoned absence
- Unauthorised leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Unwarranted delayed return from leave of absence (without school agreement)
- Persistent late arrival after the register has closed

- Part of the legal process between the school and local authority (i.e. at Attendance Panel Reviews)
- Truancy, including attendance and exclusion sweeps (formerly truancy sweeps).

A minimum evidential requirement of ten (10) school sessions, a session is either a morning or afternoon, lost to unauthorised absences by any pupil in the current term **and/or** eighteen (18) session lost to unauthorised absence over two consecutive term will be required to trigger the process.

Payment of a penalty within 21 days of receipt of the notice is £60 for each parent. Payment after this time, but within 28 days of receipt of the notice is £120, **[The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013]**.

Penalty notices may also be issued if pupils who are excluded appear in a public place without good reason.

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice a check is made by the Attendance and Welfare Service to ensure that the request meets the terms of the Code of Conduct.

8.0 THE ROLE OF THE PUPIL SUPPORT MANAGER

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. The Pupil Support Manager will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, we will invite the Parent/Carer to a school attendance panel. At this meeting, strategies will be discussed to improve attendance.

Should the situation continue, the Pupil Support Manager might seek advice from the Local Authority in respect of any legal proceedings.

9.0 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

No child will be removed from roll without consultation between the Headteacher or Associate Leader (Behaviour) and the Pupil Support Manager. If a child is missing from education with prolonged unexplained absences or if a family moves away from the area but does not register with another school, the school will alert the Local Authority who will then take action according to the Child Missing in Education Policy and procedures. Movement of children between Local Authorities and schools is tracked nationally.

10.0 PUBLICATION OF ATTENDANCE FIGURES

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance.