



**Ranelagh Primary
School**

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PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed on:

28th September 2026

Next Review due:

Autumn 2027

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Hooper', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'O. Hopper', written over a horizontal line.

Headteacher

Introduction

Ranelagh Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. There is clear evidence of a link between good attendance at school and high levels of attainment. Only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school and we will make every effort to support them to achieve this.

All staff at Ranelagh Primary have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. Staff will work together to provide an environment and culture in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality. We understand the importance of building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

At Ranelagh Primary, we recognise that poor or uneven attendance can be a sign of wider issues in the lives of the children concerned and as such, our attendance monitoring procedures are interlinked with those for child protection and safeguarding.

This policy is based on current government, local authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community know of the policy and have access to it.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)

- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - o The importance of good attendance
 - o That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - o The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - o The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the School Business Manager to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - o Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - o Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - o Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Accountable for results against national expectations
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jess Hearn and can be contacted via 01473 251608 jessica.hearn@ranelagh.suffolk.sch.uk

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office on Arbor.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the headteacher who can be contacted via 01473 251608 admin@ranelagh.suffolk.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once

during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school opens for the children at 8.40am and the register will be called promptly at 8.55am. The register will be called by the class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child. Any child who arrives between 8.55-9.25am will be marked as late (L code).

The register will close at 9.25am and any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will be counted as an unauthorised absence (U code).

In the afternoon, the register will be taken at 1pm for reception and KS1 and 1.15pm for KS2. The register will close at 1.30pm (EYFS/KS1) and 1.45pm (KS2).

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01473 251608.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 4 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. If they arrive late it is both very disruptive to their own education and to that of others within their class. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon).

This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Reasons such as missing the bus, issues with finding a parking space or lost shoes will not be classed as a legitimate reason.

A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Attendance Service.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building at any time. Pupils arriving late should therefore *report to the school office to allow staff to register pupils and ascertain their lunchtime requirements*. It is VITALLY important that all pupils & parents/carers arriving late follow this procedure.

Pupils who arrive late but before the register closes must report to the school office where their parents/carers must give an explanation for the reason for their lateness.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the family home or call the police if they are concerned.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with we will liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer for advice.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents will be able to access their child's attendance information on our pupil information management system, Arbor.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Exceptional circumstances refer to rare, unavoidable events that justify a pupil being absent during term time. These are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher, who has sole discretion to authorise them.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- where leave has been granted by the school in advance where:
 - o a pupil is to be educated off site, for example to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
 - o a pupil is participating in an educational trip or visit authorised by the school,
 - o a pupil is involved in an exceptional special event/occasion and permission has been granted by the Headteacher in advance. In authorising such an absence, the individual circumstances of the particular case will be considered.
- In other exceptional circumstances, where permission has been granted by the Headteacher for absence and where the parents/carers with whom the child normally resides have sought permission in advance.
 - o where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend
 - o where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents/carers should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand)
 - o where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence, which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions
 - o where the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong;
 - o where the Local Authority have a duty to make travel arrangements for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty;
 - o where the pupil is of no fixed abode, their parent/carer is engaged in a trade which required them to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
 - o where the pupil has been excluded from the school and no alternative provision has been made;
 - o in other very exceptional circumstances where a request could not have

been made in advance (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least one week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean that an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always be at the discretion of the Headteacher. Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent/carer;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent/carer is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;

Where the school receives information from other sources that contradicts a parent's original reason for absence and indicates that a family holiday has been taken without following the correct procedures, a discrepancy letter may be issued. This letter will seek to confirm the reason for absence and may request evidence to support it. Where it transpires that a holiday had been taken without following the correct procedures then a penalty notice will be issued in accordance with the relevant sections of this policy.

5.2 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. If they arrive late it is both very disruptive to their own education and to that of others within their class. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon).

This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Reasons such as missing the bus, issues with finding a parking space or lost

shoes will not be classed as a legitimate reason.

A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Attendance Service.

5.3 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

A school penalty notice may be issued to any parent of a child for:

- Unauthorised leave of absence including holidays in term time.
- Parentally condoned absence where the parent is deemed capable but unwilling to address attendance problems (for example, a failure to engage with support measures).
- A parent continually failing to provide an explanation for a pupil's absence in accordance with the school's procedures.
- The pupil having a record of unauthorised absences which appear to have been avoidable.
- Persistent late arrival after the school register has closed

When the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks) These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

When issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

When a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

5.4 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

- Attendance is given a very high profile at All Saints' and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in class.
- The school will celebrate good or improved attendance.
- Parents and carers will be regularly reminded about the importance of attendance in newsletters and parent forums.
- This Attendance Policy will be shared with parents as required and will be available on the school website.
- The school will contact parents where there is a concern regarding the level of attendance or lateness. This may result in support to improve as well as challenging the need and reasons.
- The school will offer bespoke support where a need is identified.

6.1 Day to Day processes for managing attendance:

- We will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This information will give information about the amount of time missed and impact on pupil's learning.
- Hold regular meetings with parents of pupils who the school consider to be vulnerable or are persistently/ severely absent to discuss attendance and engage at school.
- Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Make the necessary statutory data returns to the LA.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps

7. Systems for managing absence and ensuring that children are safe include:

7.1 First-day calling

Ranelagh Primary School has a system of 'first-day calling' in place. This means that parents/carers will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent where no explanation for the absence has been received. This phone call will be made by 9.30am. The system helps to identify, at an early stage, pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parent's/carer's knowledge. Where it is not possible to make direct contact with parents/carers a message will be left on the parents/carers telephone(s). If contact has not been made with the parents/carers by the end of the week, or earlier if there are reasons for concern, a letter/ email will be sent home asking the parents/carers to contact the school immediately.

7.2 Meetings with parents/carers

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence or where staff are particularly concerned the school will contact parents/carers to notify them of their concerns. A meeting may then be arranged to discuss the reasons for the absences. At the meeting plans should be put in place with the parents/carers and the pupil to resolve any difficulties, to provide appropriate support and to improve the attendance within a specified time limit. This would usually be no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents/carers that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

7.3 Referral to the Education Attendance Service

If unauthorised absences continue following this time limit (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all) the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer

7.4 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour means that the pupil will be potentially vulnerable to harm and will also not be receiving a full-time education. Ranelagh Primary School takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure that it does not happen. If, however a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will try to make contact with his/her parents/carers immediately, inform the local police and establish a search team to locate the pupil.

8. Collection and analysis of data

- The Family Support Practitioner monitors attendance and late marks daily, highlighting immediate concerns to the Headteacher as required. Weekly reports are then produced for Headteacher detailing where children have reached thresholds that may require further action and any improving/declining trends.
- Termly attendance monitoring takes place for each child with a letter sent home detailing the percentage of attendance and highlighting how this is classified where attendance is of concern
- Letters are sent to parents where attendance levels fall below 90% and if attendance does not improve then a meeting will take place with the Headteacher
- This data is presented at liaison meetings with the Education Welfare Officer to identify those parents who will be issued with a warning letter.
- Attendance data is shared at termly Learning and Achievement Committee meetings and forms part of the Headteacher's Reports for Governors.
- Accurate attendance returns will be made to the Department for Education within the stipulated time frame
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted

support to these pupils and their families.

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- The school will keep the attendance register for three years after the date on which the last entry was made.

9. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.3, above)

10. Reviewing the Policy

The school will review this policy every three years or sooner if:

- There are changes to Department for Education guidance or legislation
- The Local Authority updates its procedures for managing absence.
- Absence monitoring indicates that policy changes may be required to make it more effective.

11. Links to Other Policies

This policy is linked to the school's

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Evacuation Procedures.

12. Conclusion

Excellent school attendance contributes to the health and safety of children and supports them in reaching their maximum potential. Being a member of a school community builds

confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute and to be responsible for the well-being of others. Excellent school attendance supports engagement in ongoing education and employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement

B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)

E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In police detention · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or · Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 **Exceptional Absence Request**

At Ranelagh Primary School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

Events that are “rare, significant, unavoidable and short”. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation an exceptional circumstance (Working Together to improve School attendance s38 P18)

This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'.
- shopping trips;
- children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours.

Section A – to the Headteacher, I wish to apply for:				
Name of Child/ren	Class	From	To	No. School Days

Section B - Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the circumstances which make your application exceptional; and cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday from school.

Section C - I am the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides. The information I have given on this form is correct.

Print name _____ Relationship to child/

children _____ Signature _____ Date:

Section D – for school use only. To be returned to the parent/carer

Child's name: _____ Class:

_____ Current attendance rate: _____

Requested period of absence from: _____ To:

_____ Your request for exceptional leave is: **Authorised Not**

Authorised Signature of Headteacher: _____ Date:.....