ATTENDANCE
POLICY

Last Updated: 10/03/2019

Contents

1. Aims

REACH aims to meet its obligations with regards to attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

REACH is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all its pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

REACH will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

If there are problems, which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), 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

- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. REACH procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. REACH will notify the referring school of attendance daily

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 09.30 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09.30 and will be kept open until 09.45. The register for the second session will be taken at 13.15 and will be kept open until 13.30.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 10.15 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Please contact REACH on 07720805658 or email admin@reachessex.com

REACH will contact referring school as soon as they are notified of any unplanned absence with the information that they have received from parent/carer.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless REACH has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, REACH may ask parents to provide 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 REACH 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.

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the referring school may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to clarify details of the illness / medical condition and to establish a possible return date for the child.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration 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 pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents are required to request leave for medical or dental appointments in writing with a copy of the appointment card. Parents are asked to give as much notice as possible of such appointments. Any appointment cards given to REACH will be forwarded onto the referring school.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance to the referring school. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

When a pupil is persistently late REACH will contact parent/carer and do a home visit to see how we can help improve attendance.

3.5 Following up absence

REACH will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary and pass this information onto the referring school to identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Unauthorised attendance will be followed up by the referring school.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents at 4 and 6 weekly review

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Permission for any absence needs to be requested in writing from the referring school by

parent/ carer

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

In the belief that pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs the curriculum will be regularly reviewed.

Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the initial visit.

Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties at REACH, are to be promptly investigated by REACH and reported to the referring school (bullying etc needs to link with behaviour policy and equal opportunities policies).

6. Attendance monitoring

Attendance will be reported to the referring school daily and attendance concerns and actions taken around there concerns will also be reported to the referring school on that day.

7. Roles and responsibilities.

7.1 Director of Alternative Education iis responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently within REACH, and for monitoring absence data and reporting concerns to referring schools.

7.2 Family liaison Team (FIT)
- Monitors attendance data at REACH and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the referring school and director of alternative education.

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the senior leadership team. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Board of Directors.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day