



REDRUTH SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy was adopted 16th July 2015

The policy is to be reviewed in July 2017

**The names of the designated individuals are:
Alex Kettlewell**

Attendance Policy 2015

Principles

We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels valued and safe.

Maintaining and improving attendance of the whole school, or groups of individual students requires persistent vigilance in every school.

Redruth School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school, we do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede full attendance are identified and addressed as speedily as possible. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Our school actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all our students.

Our school gives a high priority to conveying to parents, carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. All school staff work with students and their families to ensure this happens. We recognise that parents and carers 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 is concern about attendance. To achieve this we:

- provide an efficient and effective system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide information, advice and support
- provide an effective system of rewards and incentives which acknowledge the efforts our students make to improve their attendance or time-keeping
- challenge the behaviour and attitudes of those students and parent/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

We fully support current government action to improve attendance, including measures designed to reduce holidays taken in term time, and therefore the school has made the decision not to authorise any holidays. Absence requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote a welcoming atmosphere that makes students feel safe and valued
- encourage good relationships between the school and parents/carers
- stress the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and absence followed up quickly
- ensure that all students receive suitable teaching and receive rewards for success

Intentions

By following this policy we ensure that:

- all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations
- all staff complete registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 15 minutes of the start of the session
- all staff take a register for each lesson, to prevent truancy from individual lessons
- we encourage parents/carers to contact school early on the first day of absence
- we reward good and improved attendance of all students
- we promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence
- we analyse data and evaluate attendance procedures regularly
- we consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

Procedures

To support the key policy statements the following procedures are followed:

Raising Awareness of Attendance

We promote good attendance by making parents/carers, students and staff aware of its importance and their responsibilities.

- Attendance features on the agenda of Tutor meetings, Student Progress and Governor Meetings
- There is a named Governor with responsibility for Attendance. This is Ross Williams.

The Role of Parents/Carers

- Regular liaison is used to reduce “authorised” absences and to educate and inform parents/carers so as to establish high attendance as a valuable feature of school life
- Details of each student’s record of Attendance are included in their progress reports and annual report sent home to parents/carers
- Parents/carers are informed and reminded of the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality through newsletters, parents’ evenings, school website, the main reception plasma screen and letters home
- Parents/carers of students are asked to contact the Attendance Officer on the first day of absence and every subsequent day unless notified in advance. Contact can be made by telephone on 01209 203780, by email to shaigh@redruth.cornwall.sch.uk or by text to 07624 811982. Reasons for absence must also be provided in writing to the Form Tutor or Attendance Officer upon return. Any attendance information received by the Form Tutor must be forwarded to the Attendance Officer promptly. The Attendance Officer will then code the student’s absence electronically and will keep a manual record of all telephone calls received
- If the Attendance Officer does not receive a message regarding absences, parents/carers will be contacted by text/phone. It is important that the school is made aware of any absence for students in the interests of their welfare and legal compliance
- Parents/carers will be invited to download the Redruth App which will alert them and enable them to respond to any absences or lates recorded for their child quickly and free of charge. It will also enable them to monitor their child’s attendance in a pro-active way.

The Role of Students

- Registration is at 8.30am. Students are expected to be in school by 8.25a.m. Students arriving late for the school day during registration time are expected to go straight to tutor time (8.30 – 8.50) where they will be marked as late. Students arriving after tutor time are required to report to the Attendance Officer to sign in. Registers will close at 9.30am. Students that arrive late, but before 9.30am, will be marked as 'L' in the register. Regular lates will be monitored and parents informed. There are consequences in place for lateness and persistent lateness; please refer to our Behaviour For Learning Policy (BFL Policy)
- Any student arriving to school after registers close at 9.30am, will be deemed as truanting unless a genuine reason can be provided to explain their absence. The school reserves the right to decide what is deemed a genuine absence. Such students will be coded in the register as 'U' (unauthorised late) without a genuine reason
- Students who leave Redruth School for appointments before the end of the school day must have written permission from parents/carers and it must have been authorised by their Year Pastoral Leader. On leaving the premises they must sign out with the Attendance Officer
- Students will be regularly informed about the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality through lessons, assemblies, Tutors, plasma screens and Attendance Weeks
- Students may be required to meet with Pastoral Leaders and/or the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and or Attendance Officer to discuss any attendance concerns, following consultation with their parent/carer.

The Role of All Staff at Redruth School

- Redruth School makes use of an electronic system to record and monitor attendance. Each lesson staff record attendance via the SIMS network. All staff have access to SIMS. All teaching rooms have desk top PCs and all staff are provided with laptops
- Redruth School's attendance record is maintained electronically and supervised by the Attendance Officer
- Any unexplained first day absences are promptly followed up by the Attendance Officer with a text or telephone call home to the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the non-attendance
- The Form Tutor completes all explained outstanding attendance returns promptly using the approved codes to record absences. This is returned to the Attendance Officer promptly
- Should no parent/carer contact be forthcoming within 3 days, a letter is sent by the Attendance Officer requesting information regarding the student's absence
- A weekly update of Tutor Group attendance is presented to staff via the bulletin
- Punctuality is monitored by all staff and appropriate action is taken to redress persistent late arrival at school or to lessons (refer to BFL Policy)
- Staff challenge students who do not arrive on time and seek a reason for lateness. Staff record the student's lateness electronically using the SIMS system
- Should a punctuality problem persist staff should inform the students Tutor and Year Group Pastoral Leader and parents/carers will be contacted. Further problems are referred to the EWO
- Information about Redruth School's expectations for attendance is included on our website and in our prospectus.

Students Returning After an Absence

Procedures are put in place to help Students catch up when they return after absence.

- Pastoral Leaders provide students who have been absent from school for a substantial period of time with a meeting to ensure a successful reintegration back into full time education. All strategies and support agreed at this meeting is clearly communicated to all staff and parents/carers
- Pastoral staff, particularly the Form Tutor, take special responsibility for encouraging students to attend school and helping them settle back in
- Subject faculties initiate procedures to help Students catch up with missed work.

Supporting Students with maintaining regular attendance

- Redruth School provides comprehensive pastoral support and offers advice and support to all students, as required, to ensure they can achieve regular attendance and achieve their potential
- Pastoral Leaders provide support and advice to all students and their families who may be struggling to achieve regular attendance. This may involve referral to other professionals or additional support from the Education Welfare Officer
- Redruth School staff ensure that any reasonable adjustments are made to enable students to maintain regular attendance, should they have medical needs that are preventing them from attending regularly
- Redruth School works alongside a number of agencies and offers appropriate referrals and access to Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to ensure the needs of students are identified and appropriate support is provided
- Should a student be absent for a significant amount of time due to medical needs (more than 20 sessions absent within 100 sessions), Redruth School refer the family to the Education Welfare Officer for appropriate support.

Dealing with Unexplained or Unauthorised Absences

Redruth School promotes regular attendance and supports any student that is struggling to achieve the expected level of 95%, so they can maximise their potential. Unexplained absences and persistent absence is challenged and investigated. Parents/carers need to be aware that regular school attendance is a legal requirement under section 7 of the Education Act (1996). Parents/carers may be prosecuted for failure to ensure their child attends school regularly (s444, Education Act 1996).

- If a student is absent without explanation, Redruth School contacts the parents/carers as soon as is possible, via text or phone on the first day and each subsequent day unless notified in advance
- If a student is absent for more than three days without an explanation, Redruth School writes to the parents/carers, keeping a copy of the letter and recording the date it was posted
- If a student returns from an absence where an explanation has not been provided, Redruth School contacts the parents/carers asking why the student was absent
- All notes from parents/carers, text messages or records of telephone calls and medical certificates are dated and initialled by Redruth School. These will be stored in a secure place, as they may contain sensitive information
- All unexplained absences are discussed with the Education Welfare Officer to seek advice and consideration of further investigation
- If an explanation for absence is not satisfactory, or if the absence continues, Redruth School invites the parents/carers to school to discuss any difficulties that are preventing the student from attending. This is done as soon as possible, so that the problem is tackled early

- At Redruth School we update our absence records each week to detect short but frequent absences and identify any emerging patterns
- The Government does not encourage absences during school time for family holidays and Redruth School only authorises absences under “exceptional circumstances”. If a parent/carer wishes to request such an absence, they must complete the appropriate request form and submit it to school. The Education Welfare Officer makes a recommendation to the Headteacher following an investigation into the students’ attendance record and reasons given for the absence. Absences that are not authorised by the Headteacher are referred to the Education Welfare Officer and a warning will be given to parents/carers. Legal information is provided to parents/carers, with a letter informing them of non-authorisation. Any further absences (leading to more than 20 sessions in total) not authorised within the same academic year are subject to the Local Authority (LA) issuing a Penalty Notice to the parent/carer.

Role of the Education Welfare Officer & Pastoral Leaders

- To assist in the monitoring of attendance weekly printouts are provided to Pastoral Leaders (PL) and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) by the Attendance Officer (AO)
- The Form Tutor and Attendance Officer must report any attendance concerns to the Pastoral Leaders. In cases of unauthorised absences contact with home by the AO is usually required immediately, following consultation with the PL
- Pastoral Leaders meet weekly with their Senior Leadership team (SLT) line manager and EWO to discuss attendance and identify students, strategies and actions
- **The EWO meets separately with PL each week to review the attendance in their Year. The EWO is provided with data by the AO and follows up agreed absences which are below 90% or that are giving cause for concern**
- Pastoral Leaders initiate a formal meeting involving Parents/carers, students and the EWO when attendance falls below 90% to complete an Individual Attendance Plan (I.A.P). This will involve setting targets, agreeing strategies and attaching rewards and sanctions to a contract, with an agreed date for review, which requires the signature of all parties
- Pastoral Leaders, the EWO and the Attendance Officer maintain an agreed list of students who have attendance problems. These students have regular attendance checks and immediate phone calls home are made when they are absent
- For students with persistent absence due to illness, the EWO is asked to contact parents/carers. Following an investigation and an agreed IAP, the EWO continues to monitor attendance and review the IAP should the attendance not improve. The EWO may advise that parents/carers are asked to provide medical evidence to the school before any further absences are authorised
- Any student that continues to have persistent absence below 85% is formally referred to the EWO for investigation. This may involve visiting family homes. Continued persistent absences that are not authorised by the school may lead to the EWO initiating legal proceedings against parents/carers. This may involve penalty notices and /or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Redruth School Will Promote Good Attendance By:

- sending letters of congratulations to good attendees
- presenting certificates/VIVOs to those students who achieve 100% attendance at the end of each term, and the year
- presenting certificates to those students who make a substantial improvement to their attendance

- holding attendance clinics at which the EWO and PL meet with parents/carers and students where problems have arisen
- Agree Individual Attendance Plans (IAP) with students and parents/carers and review these regularly until attendance improves above 90%
- sending letters to parents/carers of students who fall below the attendance threshold agreed between the school and Education Welfare Services
- promoting competition both between and within Tutor Groups/Houses to win attendance prizes
- making Redruth School a place where students want to be.
- seeking the views of all stakeholders (including students and parents/carers) on attendance
- organising an **attendance week** during which all staff focus on attendance e.g. assemblies, PSHE/Citizenship, have coordinated visits from the EWO and other agencies.

Redruth School: Attendance Targets

The target for 2015/2016 for the whole of Redruth School is 95% and above.

The target for 2015/2016 for Persistent Absences is 5% and below.

Monitoring Attendance at Redruth School:

< 90%



