

# Little Reddings Primary School

## Attendance Policy

### Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day and to arrive on time properly attired and in a condition to learn, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the '*Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006*' the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

### The legal requirement for attendance at school:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states

Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) To any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

### Registration

The school registers are legal documents and every care is taken to ensure that they are filled in accurately and correctly.

Registers are taken twice in the school day. Once in the morning at 8:40 (KS2), 8:50 (Rec and KS1) and 8:30 (Nurs) and once in the afternoon at 12:30 (Nurs), 1:00 (Rec and KS1) and 1:30 (KS2).

Registers officially close in the morning at **9:15**.

Pupils arriving after the start time for school, but while the register is still open, can be marked as 'late' but present for the morning session.

Any pupil arriving at school after closure of the morning register will be marked absent for the whole of the morning session.

Registers will be marked in accordance with DfE guidance. (See Absence and Attendance Codes January 2009.)

## **Absences**

### ***Authorised absence***

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### ***Unauthorised absence***

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.

Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. **It is the ultimate decision of the Head teacher as to whether an absence is authorised or not.**

### ***Following up absence***

We require to be notified by the parent/carer on each day of absence.

If no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence by 10am on the first day of absence, a parent of the pupil will be contacted. If no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence after 3 consecutive days, sooner if we think it is necessary, and the pupil has not returned, a letter will be sent and we will inform the Local Authority's Attendance Improvement Officer. This will be sooner if deemed necessary. On the child's return to school, if there is no explanation provided for the absence, a letter requesting this will be sent to the pupil's parents. There will be a maximum of three written requests for a reason for the absence. If no reasons are forthcoming, the absence will be recorded on the register and attendance system as *unauthorised*. If there is prolonged or regular absence, there will be letters sent home to parents/carers in the first instance. If appropriate, there will be meetings with parents in school and the possible involvement of the Local Authority's Attendance Improvement Officer.

### ***Term Time Holidays***

Due to changes contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, the Head teacher no longer has the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for family holidays or extend leave for parents to visit their country of origin. Head teachers have the discretion to grant leave **only for exceptional circumstances**. The Head teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if any leave is granted. Any absence not agreed as exceptional will be marked as **unauthorised**.

### ***Long-term absence***

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over **five** days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school may contact support services, so that arrangements can be explored for the child's educational provision.

## **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Little Redding's School have now, with the consent of the School Governors, adopted the use of Fixed Penalty Notices for school non-attendance.

When a pupil's unauthorised absences reach 15 sessions (half a day is 1 session), the Head teacher, in agreement with the governing body, may apply to the LA for a penalty notice to be issued when:

*The pupil's absences have been unauthorised for at least 15 sessions in the previous and/or current term for example unauthorised holidays etc.*

AND

*The parent or carer is not willing to take responsibility for securing their children's attendance and has not co-operated with all proposed voluntary or supportive measures.*

### ***Amount and payment of penalty***

The amount of the penalty shall be:

- a) £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice.
- b) £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice.

If the penalty notice is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the LA must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

### **Attendance targets**

The school's target for attendance is 97%+

September 2014

To be reviewed Sept 2016