



Education

Trust Attendance Policy

| | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|
| Academy level contribution: | | |
| CEO approval: | Sean Kelly | Date: November 2022 |
| Education Group consultation (where applicable): | | Date: |
| LGB Cluster consultation (where applicable): | | Date: |
| Joint Negotiating Council (JNC) consultation (where applicable): | | Date: |
| Board ratification: | Autumn Board | Date: November 2022 |
| Last reviewed on: | November 2022 | |
| Next review due by: | November 2023 | |

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Statement of Intent | 3 |
| 2. Introduction | 3 |
| 3. Aims and Objectives | 3 |
| 4. Attendance Legislation | 4 |
| 5. Roles and Responsibilities | 4 |
| 7. Attendance Monitoring | 6 |
| 8. Sickness..... | 6 |
| 9. First-day Contact..... | 7 |
| 10. The 10-day Rule | 7 |
| 11. Attendance Registration | 7 |
| 12. Raleigh Education Trust Attendance & Welfare Team | 7 |
| 13. Persistent Absence | 8 |
| 14. Home Visits | 8 |
| 15. Leave of Absence | 9 |
| 16. Vulnerable pupils | 9 |
| 17. Request for Service | 9 |
| 18. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences | 10 |
| 19. Note to parents..... | 10 |
| 20. Linked Policies/Procedures..... | 11 |

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 We intend to work in partnership with the Local Authority and parents/carers to support pupils in attending their education within the Raleigh Education Trust. We intend to support and encourage pupils to attend their education across all academies within the Raleigh Education Trust or at one or more of our approved Alternative Providers by providing a relevant curriculum and pastoral care. We recognise that it is our responsibility to do everything possible to raise parent/carers' awareness of the importance of attendance and punctuality and that it is a legal requirement to attend school regularly.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils. The Department of Education states that any pupil with 90% attendance or below is a persistent absentee from education. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these pupils at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is also a clear link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement.
- 2.2 Parents of compulsory school-age (5 to 16 years old) children have a legal duty to ensure their children receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at school (this includes home education). If a child is registered at school, parents have the responsibility of ensuring that their child attends regularly.

3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 To continue to raise levels of achievement and participation by maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- 3.2 To build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have support in place to attend school.
- 3.3 To keep an accurate and up-to-date record of attendance.
- 3.4 To inform parents/carers of punctuality and attendance issues.
- 3.5 To identify the cause of non-attendance and reduce absence including persistent and severe absence by early identification and appropriate intervention.
- 3.6 To ensure all pupils have access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- 3.7 To ensure all staff understand their roles in the monitoring and recording of attendance.
- 3.8 To maintain and improve attendance across the Raleigh Education Trust and associated academies and alternative providers and ensure clear expectations are shared.
- 3.9 To monitor and evaluate the processes regularly.

4. Attendance Legislation

- 4.1 *Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring any child of compulsory school age receives full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and also to any special educational needs the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school or education otherwise.*
- 4.2 *If a child who is of compulsory school age (5-16 years old) who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 and may be prosecuted.*
- 4.3 *These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:*
- a) Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
 - b) Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
 - c) Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
 - d) [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
 - e) [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The governing board are responsible for:

- a. Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- b. Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- c. Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- d. Monitoring attendance figures for each school.
- e. Making sure staff receive adequate training.
- f. Holding the Principals to account for the implementation of this policy.

5.2 The Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- a. Implementation of this policy.
- b. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- c. Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

- d. Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- e. Issuing fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

5.3 Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead

The Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead is responsible for:

- a. Leading attendance across the trust.
- b. Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- c. Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- d. Having oversight of data analysis.
- e. Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- f. Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- g. Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

5.4 Attendance Officer

The Attendance officer is responsible for:

- a. Monitoring and analysing attendance data. (see section 7)
- b. Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- c. Providing regular attendance reports to school staff.
- d. Working with Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) to tackle persistent absence.
- e. Conducting home visits/safe and well checks.
- f. Arranging meetings with parents and other agencies to address attendance concerns.
- g. Referring to Education Welfare Services.
- h. Referring to other relevant services.

6. Reporting Pupil Absence

- 6.1 Pupil absence must be reported by 9:30 am on each day of absence to your child's school. This can be done via telephone and select the attendance line when prompted. Parents/carers whose child attends an alternative provision must contact the provider to inform them of any absences. Due to the difference in start times for some providers, parents must familiarise themselves with the attendance procedures for each provision. Reporting absences can be done either by telephone or email. Failure to report absence will result in the Trust Attendance Team or a member of staff at the alternative provider your child attends, following up with telephone calls, texts and home visits.

- 6.2 If there has been no contact made concerning the absence, a member of the Trust Attendance Team will conduct a Safe and Well visit. This will be triggered on day 3 of absence.
- 6.3 Parents will receive termly updates regarding their child's attendance and absence levels. Pupils with good and improved attendance will receive certificates. Any attendance concerns will be communicated via letter or telephone call. Parents/carers may also be invited in for meetings with a member of the attendance team.

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

- a. Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and early across each school and at an individual level.
- b. Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a concern.

7.2 Pupil level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority levels through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

- a. Analyse data 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.
- b. Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

- a. Provide regular attendance reports to parents/carers and school leaders to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- b. Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.

8. Sickness

8.1 If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea we would advise that they remain off school for 48 hours. If your child has had no further bouts of sickness/diarrhoea during the 48 hours and you feel that your child is well enough to return please send them back to school. If at any time your child becomes ill we will monitor them and contact parents to gain permission to send them home if necessary. If we cannot contact parents the pupil will be monitored by staff until such time contact and permission are obtained.

9. First-day Contact

- 9.1 Raleigh Education Trust operates a “first-day contact” system. This means that if your child is absent and we have not been informed, a text/telephone call will be made to ascertain the reason for absence on the first day and the subsequent days' absence.
- 9.2 If we have attempted to make contact but received no reply and absence continues, further action will be taken by either the Attendance Team or the Attendance Officer at your child's provision.
- 9.3 This will include:
- a) Home visits
 - b) Contacting any agencies involved
 - c) Following the 10-Day Rule.

10. The 10-day Rule

- 10.1 If a pupil is absent for 10 days and there has been no contact made with parent/ carer and home visits have been unsuccessful a referral to Child Missing in Education will be made and further welfare services may become involved.

11. Attendance Registration

- 11.1 Attendance at our academies is recorded using Arbor- MIS system, using the approved DfE attendance codes. Each academy/alternative provider is responsible for completing registrations each day, in line with statutory guidance. The Trust Attendance & Welfare Administrator will monitor all registration sessions, as well as update with any known pupil absence and contact parent/carers for any unknown absence. The Trust Attendance & Welfare Administrator will make daily contact with all alternative providers to check on absence and any other issues that may have been raised in regards to attendance.

12. Raleigh Education Trust Attendance & Welfare Team

- 12.1 The Attendance & Welfare Team consists of six staff members. If you require any information or support please contact the following members of staff on the contact details listed:
- a) Mrs Sarah Astle – Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead sarah.astle@raleightrust.org
 - b) Mr Tim Astle – Trust Attendance and Welfare Deputy Lead tim.astle@raleightrust.org
 - c) Mrs Dawn Mansbridge – Trust Attendance and Welfare Officer
dawn.mansbridge@raleightrust.org

- d) Mrs Sue Matthews - Trust Attendance and Welfare Officer sue.matthews@raleightrust.org
- e) Mrs Selina Martinsons – Trust Attendance Administrator selina.martinson@raleightrust.org
- f) Ms Nicola Cheetham - Trust Attendance Administrator nicola.cheetham@raleightrust.org
- g) Ms Vicki Askew – Trust Attendance Administrator victoria.askew@raleightrust.org

13. Persistent Absence

- 13.1 All pupils are expected to achieve 95% attendance in line with the government’s national expectations.
- 13.2 If a pupil’s attendance falls to 90% or below, they are at risk of becoming a potential persistent absentee. Any pupil whose attendance falls to 50% and below is classed as a severe persistent absentee. In cases of persistent absence, the following procedure will be followed:
- a) Letter sent to inform parent/carer of the concern, and stating improvement must be made.
 - b) If no improvement in attendance is made a meeting with the parent/carer will be arranged to address any concerns or reasons for poor attendance. During this meeting, a PEAP (Personalised Education and Attendance Plan) will be completed in agreement with the school, parents and pupil.
 - c) Targets are set for the pupil to achieve within an agreed timeline.
 - d) If there has been no significant improvement within an agreed time period and all offers of support and intervention fail, a referral to Education Welfare will be made.
- 13.2 To identify pupils at risk of falling into this category, weekly meetings will be held with the Trust Attendance Lead, Senior Leaders and the DSL of each academy. This core team of staff will use the attendance data from the whole school to look for trends within the cohorts to identify those at risk early and implement the appropriate level of intervention.

14. Home Visits

- 14.1 Home visits will be conducted for many reasons:
- a) Unable to contact parent/carers
 - b) Safe and well checks – any pupil that we have not managed to see or who has not attended the academy or provision for 3 days, will receive a home visit to establish contact and to confirm a visual sighting of the child. If this is unsuccessful the process will be repeated until a visual sighting is made. If a pupil has not been seen for 10 days we will follow the procedure for Children Missing in Education. We work collaboratively with providers and they also conduct home visits to establish contact.

- c) Check addresses and contact details

15. Leave of Absence

- 15.1 If you require a leave of absence, you must do so in writing either by letter, email, or by completing a leave of absence request form. These can be requested from the main reception of each academy and addressed to the attention of the Academy Principal. The Principal will make the overall decision as to whether or not to authorise any leave of absence requested during term time and/or to initiate a penalty notice for the holiday taken. All holidays should be taken during the school's allocated holidays or there is the possibility of a penalty notice being requested by the Local Authority.
- 15.2 Leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances at the Principal's discretion and will be decided on an individual basis taking account of any contextual information provided by the parent/carer. The Principal's decision will be final and communicated in writing to the parent. Parents are invited to contact the Academy Principal should they feel that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the requested leave.
- 15.3 Parents have the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Local Governing Body (LGB) Chair within 5 days of the decision. Any appeal must outline reasons for reconsideration. LGB appeals will be heard within 15 days of receipt.

16. Vulnerable pupils

- 16.1 Social workers, as well as parents/carers, will be contacted in the event of an absence. This primarily applies to children on an active Child Protection Plan or Child In Need plan and will be triggered on the first day of absence. Any failure to make contact will also result in a home visit.

17. Request for Service

- 17.1 We will request intervention from Education Welfare Service for pupils whose unauthorised absence is above 10%. The Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead will identify those pupils who need Education Welfare involvement. A referral will then be made, we will gather the evidence and this will be sent to the Education Welfare Service, all letters and correspondence from alternative providers in regards to attendance at the named provisions will also be used as evidence to support the referral.
- 17.2 Prior to the Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead requesting legal action, parents/carers will receive at least one warning letter and will also be invited in for an attendance meeting to discuss the concerns we have regarding attendance. We aim to resolve attendance issues by being as flexible and supportive as possible with pupils' various needs and concerns.

18. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

18.1 Authorised Absences:

18.1.1 The Trust Attendance Team and associated academies will authorise absences, but this will depend on the circumstances of the absence. Authorised absence can be as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence. All periods of authorised absence will be determined by the Academy after sufficient reason and explanation have been established.

18.2 Family holidays during term time:

18.2.1 Parents should not normally take their child on holiday during term time. Any leave of absence should be requested by filling out a holiday request form addressed to the Principal. Holidays will only be authorised due to exceptional circumstances. Any holidays taken during term time, recorded as unauthorised, may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.

18.3 Illness, medical and dental appointments:

18.3.1 Any absences due to medical appointments will be authorised on the production of a medical appointment card/letter.

18.3.2 If a child presents as ill whilst at their academy or their provision and is sent home due to illness, their absence will be authorised. If the child fails to return to the academy or provision the following day due to the illness presented on the previous day, that day will also be authorised. Any further days of absence, that run concurrently, will need to be confirmed by a doctor and a medical note/ appointment card/ prescription slip will be required as proof.

18.4 Days of religious observance:

18.4.1 This absence is set aside for any day exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. This includes religious festivals. The academy will be sensitive to requests and parents are encouraged to give advanced notice.

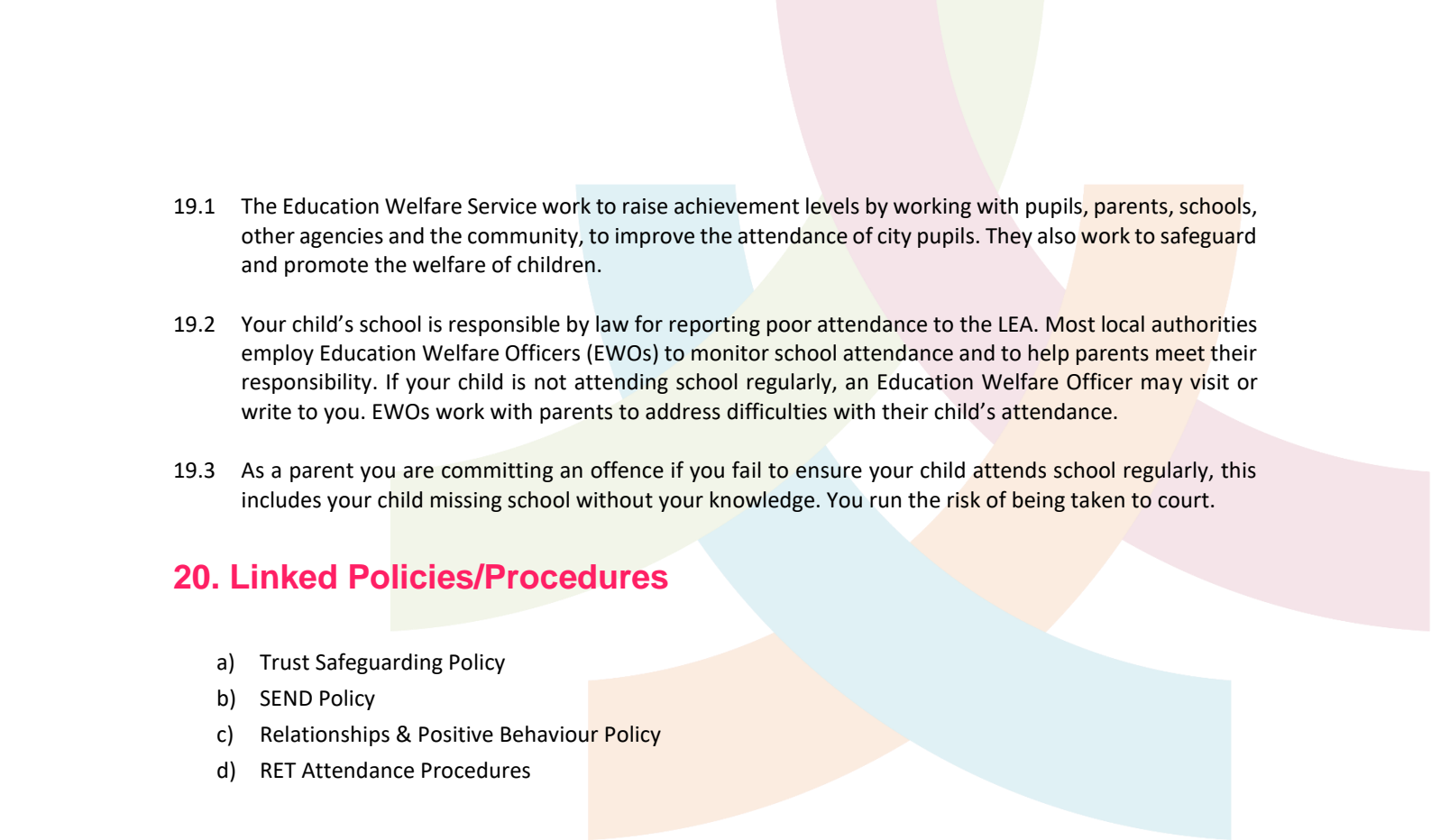
18.5 Exclusions:

18.5.1 Any pupils that have received a suspension will remain on roll, with the absence authorised. If for any reason a child attending a provision, loses their placement or the placement breaks down, the period of absence will be authorised until a suitable alternative placement can be established.

18.6 Family bereavements:

18.6.1 In the case of a family bereavement, the academy will be sensitive and look at each case on an individual basis and have discretion when authorising such absences.

19. Note to parents

- 
- 19.1 The Education Welfare Service work to raise achievement levels by working with pupils, parents, schools, other agencies and the community, to improve the attendance of city pupils. They also work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 19.2 Your child's school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the LEA. Most local authorities employ Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) to monitor school attendance and to help parents meet their responsibility. If your child is not attending school regularly, an Education Welfare Officer may visit or write to you. EWOs work with parents to address difficulties with their child's attendance.
- 19.3 As a parent you are committing an offence if you fail to ensure your child attends school regularly, this includes your child missing school without your knowledge. You run the risk of being taken to court.

20. Linked Policies/Procedures

- a) Trust Safeguarding Policy
- b) SEND Policy
- c) Relationships & Positive Behaviour Policy
- d) RET Attendance Procedures