

# **Radburn Primary School - Attendance Policy**

**In school, on time, every single day!**

Radburn Primary School is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for individual children and Radburn Primary School as a whole. There is a clear link between high levels of attendance and high levels of progress. We believe that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Radburn Primary School expects to work closely together in partnership with parents and carers in order to achieve excellent levels of school attendance and punctuality for all pupils.

## **Responsibilities – Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers whose children are registered at Radburn Primary School are responsible by law for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.

Parents and Carers should:-

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and ready to learn
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct and Behaviour Policy.
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings
- work in partnership with Radburn Primary School to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify Radburn Primary School if their child is absent. This should be done as soon as possible on the first day of absence providing an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed - preferably in writing - when the child returns to school
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- not book holidays during term time

## **Responsibilities - Radburn Primary School**

Radburn Primary School is responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance. We believe early intervention is essential in dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality.

Radburn Primary School will:-

- work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole consistently applying this attendance policy across the school

- support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- complete attendance registers at the start of the school day and at the start of the afternoon session recording whether pupils are present or absent
- close registers at 9:10am and 1:15pm each day after which time children arriving late to school will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence
- differentiate in the registers between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised (see below).
- reward good and improving attendance and punctuality with praise, attendance certificates and the class rewards scheme. Good attendance is considered to be above 95%

### **Following up Absence and Improving Attendance**

Good attendance and punctuality will form part of celebration assemblies and will be promoted by class teachers throughout Radburn Primary School on a daily basis.

Class awards for highest attendance will form part of weekly monitoring of overall school attendance by the Headteacher.

A Registration Certificate showing daily attendance for each child will be sent home to parents/carers every term. Attendance will also be discussed with parents/carers at each parents evening and whenever there is a cause for concern from either parents/carers or the class teacher or Headteacher.

Radburn Primary School will, on the first-day of absence of any child, (where parents/carers have not already contacted the school) contact parents/carers to ask for the reason their child is not at school.

Parents and carers whose children are returning to school after an absence should confirm the reason for their absence (preferably with a written note) with the class teacher who will record the reason for absence. Children will be recorded as having unauthorised absence until a satisfactory reason for absence is established.

Only Radburn Primary School can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent/carer has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Holidays requested for children whose attendance is less than 95% will not be authorised. Holidays requested for children whose attendance is greater than 95% will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### **Authorising Absence**

Absence should be authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with leave as authorised by the Headteacher.
- the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause

- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- Radburn Primary School at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority for any of the following:
  - the child's transport to and from school
  - boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school
- enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- there is a family bereavement

Hertfordshire County Council allocates Attendance Improvement Officers to schools to enforce regular school attendance. In doing so it enables schools and parent/carers to meet their respective responsibilities.

Radburn Primary School is required by Local Authority, Hertfordshire County Council to alert the Attendance Improvement Officer of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly.

Where Radburn Primary School has identified a pattern of poor attendance (either authorised or unauthorised) and/or punctuality that is causing concern, Radburn Primary School will ask the Attendance Improvement Officer to intervene to assist both the school and parents/carers to improve attendance and/or punctuality.

If a pupil who is registered at Radburn Primary School, fails to attend school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the Attendance Improvement Officer and the school fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action.

In addition Radburn Primary School will make use of Fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absences which are above 10 days in a term.

- The Penalty notice will be issued via the Local Authority on the advice of and at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- The Fixed Penalty Fine will be £50 if paid within 28 days. This will rise to £100 after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid the Local Authority may prosecute.
- The Attendance Improvement Team sees Fixed Penalty Notices as an effective part of Radburn Primary School's drive to improve attendance and reduce unauthorised absences.

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Headteacher:.....

Chair of Governors:.....

Dated: May 2011