



## Attendance and Late Procedure

### Registration

Phase	Registration & Lesson Start	Doors Close	Register closes
Nursery	8.45am	8.55am	9.00am
Reception, Year 1 and Year 2	8.40am	8.50am	8.55am
Year 3 – Year 6	8.50am	9.00am	9.00am

### Registration & Lessons Start

1. This is the time that the doors open and children are registered. Whilst children are registered, there are learning opportunities in place such as responding to feedback, reading, editing a piece of work, answering questions or direct intervention during this time. If your child arrives after this time, they are already missing essential learning. Formal lessons (phonics, reading, writing or maths) start 10 minutes after this time.

Each class teacher, or their nominated representative, is responsible for marking children present in the register at morning and afternoon registration. The registers must be completed promptly to avoid discrepancies between classes.

### Late Registration

Pupils requiring admittance to school following registration periods must go to the main entrance and request entry via the school office

The school office is responsible for maintaining the signing in/out system. This is an electronic system that records details of name, class, time admitted/time released, reason for lateness/early departure and name of supervising

adult. For health and safety reasons, after the registration close time, an entry **MUST** be placed in the signing in system before a late pupil is admitted or released.

In accordance with current guidance, the attendance registers are closed at 9.15am. This means that any pupil who arrives after the registration period for their year group but before the registers are closed (9.15am) will be given a late mark (L) in the register. This code is classed as a present mark, but displays that the pupil arrived late for school. Any pupil who arrives after the registers have closed (9.15am) but before the end of the morning session will be given a "late after registers closed" mark (U) in the register. This code is classed as an unauthorised absence but displays that the pupil was physically present in school for part of the session. As this is considered an unauthorised absence, this will get recorded against a child's attendance percentage in school.

In addition to using the L and U codes, office staff will also use the facility within the Scholarpack attendance module to record the number of minutes late for each pupil, on each occasion. This facility will allow school staff to monitor and manage developing patterns of lateness more effectively and make a clear link between lateness and missed curriculum; and share such information with parents.

The fact that the U code is classed as an unauthorised absence means that when it is used, pupils are likely to be missing significant amounts of schooling; putting their educational progress at risk. For this reason the use of this code will be considered as serious as any other unauthorised absence and will attract the interest of external agencies, including referral to the local authority attendance team and consideration of the use of legal measures, in just the same way.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

In every instance it is the Headteacher who determines whether an absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. This decision is made based on information provided by parents/carers. However, because the register is a legal document, the Headteacher has responsibility to ensure that it is completed accurately and in accordance with the legislation. For this reason, it is not sufficient for an absence to be recorded as authorised based entirely on information provided by parents/carers. Therefore, there may be occasions

when it will be necessary for parents to provide evidence of reasons for absence before authorisation is granted. For example, in the case of absence due to illness or medical appointment, evidence may be requested in the form of: sight of a prescription, prescribed medication, a medical appointment card or similar.

The school office is responsible for maintaining records of reason and length of absence.

- Parents/Carers are required to contact the school office or class teacher on the first day of absence, advising of the reason for the absence and expected return date; if known
- Where information is provided to the class teacher they are responsible for passing this information to the school office
- Where a verbal message is taken by school office staff this should be noted in the register and the class teacher informed
- Where a written note is received by the class teacher this should be returned to the school office with the register
- Where the absence is for several days, the Parent/Carer is responsible for informing the school office of the continued absence and updating them as to the reason for the absence on a regular basis
- Where the absence is for several days without explanation, or the reason provided is unsatisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and will be addressed with parents promptly. Schools have a responsibility to report such absence to the Local Authority after a period of 10 school days, or sooner if appropriate
- The reason for absence should be linked directly to the pupil (e.g. illness or medical appointment of/for the child). Reasons for absence relating to parents or siblings may not be authorised

If a child is absent and no contact has been made by the family, the school office will contact the family on the first day of absence, as the registers close at 9.30am. If contact cannot be made the Headteacher should be informed and, in the case of prolonged or repeated absence without justification being given, the Headteacher will determine whether a referral to the Pupil Attendance Support Team should be made.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining what is classed as authorised and what is classed as unauthorised absence.

### **Examples of authorised absence:**

- Medical or Dental appointments, which relate directly to the pupil and unavoidably fall during the school day
- Illness of the pupil
- Leave which has been authorised by the Headteacher due to exceptional circumstances

### Examples of unauthorised absence:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after the register has closed
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and leave in term time which have not been agreed
- days that exceed the amount of leave agreed by the Headteacher

The school office is responsible for inputting the appropriate absence code on the electronic register. Where they are not certain whether an absence is authorised or not they should seek advice from the Headteacher.

Office staff may also use the comments facility within SIMS in order to log specific reasons for absence. This facility will allow school staff to monitor and manage developing patterns of absence more effectively and share such information with parents.

### **Signing Out**

The school office is responsible for overseeing the procedure for releasing children where parents/carers have requested and been granted leave during the school day.

The child(ren) can only be released to a parent or authorised carer/family member. When an authorised adult is picking up a child within school time the school office is responsible for ensuring that they complete and sign the school signing out book (see above for details of requirements). The school office is

responsible for inputting the appropriate absence code on the electronic register.

When a child leaves the school site after the morning or afternoon register has been taken, the original mark must remain in the register and the signing in/out book should be referred to during an evacuation situation to ensure all pupils can be accounted for.

## **Leave of Absence**

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools cannot authorise any leave other than in exceptional circumstances. In Rishton Methodist School the Headteacher is the person authorised by the 'proprietor' i.e. the governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings.

Leave of absence **SHALL NOT** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
- the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request.

## **Additional Factors for Consideration**

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The Local Authority expects that all parents/carers ensure their children attend school whenever possible. Absence during school time is largely prohibited by regulation and hinders academic progress. Even in exceptional circumstances, the following factors may be taken into account when considering an application for leave:

- Will leave at this point in time be detrimental to the pupil's education?
- Will he/she miss any national tests or examinations?
- Is his/her attendance a cause for concern?
- Is the proposed absence during the month of September or any other transition period?
- Has he/she already had leave during term time this year?

- Did he/she have leave of absence during term time in the previous school year(s)?
- Does he/she have any absences which have been recorded as unauthorised this year?

If work commitments are stated as supporting evidence towards an exceptional reason for requesting leave, parents will be asked to provide employer details and any additional evidence which shows why leave cannot be taken during the school holidays

Parents/Carers who need to request leave during term time should complete an application form, available from the school office as soon as possible prior to the first proposed date of absence. The Headteacher will consider the request and advise in writing within 5 days whether the absence will be authorised or not. The Headteacher may request a meeting with parents before any period of leave is authorised.

The school takes unauthorised absence seriously and, particularly in the case of repeated unauthorised absences, will undertake further liaison with the family, pupil, the School Attendance Consultant and the Pupil Attendance Support Team as appropriate. Furthermore, Rishton Methodist Primary School will request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This includes leave which is taken without a prior request being made; and leave taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the leave is taken regardless of this advice. Rishton Methodist Primary School may also request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice for days taken in excess of the agreed period of leave; without good reason. Parents also risk losing their child's school place if they do not return from leave, as agreed, and readmission cannot be guaranteed.

The school office is responsible for recording leave requests in the electronic register and will retain copies of correspondence regarding requested leave of absence for 3 years. They will also be responsible for highlighting to the Headteacher if absence continues after the notified period. In this instance the Headteacher will undertake further liaison with the family, pupil, the School Attendance Consultant and the Pupil Attendance Support Team as appropriate and a Penalty Notice will be considered.