



ATTENDANCE POLICY

2021

Rodmarton Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share the same commitment. All staff and volunteers are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy for more information.

'We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.'

Agreed by Governors: September 2021

Next review: Autumn 2023

“If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.”

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive an appropriate education. Parents who have chosen to send their children to Rodmarton School are asked to sign a Home School Agreement, indicating they will do their best to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. They are given information in the Prospectus as to how they can make their child’s time in school happy and safe.

At Rodmarton School we expect pupils to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence. Attendance is measured by the number of sessions your child is present for. There are two sessions in each school day. Registration is taken at the start of each session to determine a child’s presence for that half of the day. The expected level of attendance is a minimum of 96%, unless there is a long term illness. This allows for the occasional day or two of absence through illness, without a child falling behind with their work. Parents are given feedback on the level of their child’s attendance on their annual report, or earlier should there be a concern.

Staff do their best to encourage children to attend school regularly, following up unexplained absences and requesting reasons from parents for these.

The Governors of Rodmarton School actively promote the aims of the school, and recognise that children must attend school regularly if they are to make the best of the opportunities they have to learn and make progress.

The school evaluates attendance at least termly and is compared to national figures. These figures are reported termly to the governors. Evaluation of attendance and the effectiveness of strategies to increase attendance forms part of an OFSTED Inspection. High levels of absence will limit the ability of pupils to make the progress they are capable of and this will lead to the schools effectiveness being down-graded. High attendance will lead to an increase in pupil progress and attainment.

This policy has been written after researching advice from Gloucestershire County Council and reading the Attendance Policies of other schools.

‘Authorised’ and ‘Unauthorised’ Absence

It is a legal requirement for pupils to attend school during term time and individual pupil attendance is regularly monitored by staff and governors.

The government’s definition of persistent absence is a child who has 10% absence or more and schools are expected to follow this guidance. If your child’s attendance falls below 90% this will be discussed with you. If these absences are unauthorised, the headteacher will send you a warning letter. If your child continues to be persistently absent with unauthorised absences, a Penalty Notice may be issued by Gloucestershire County Council who have recently revised their guidance:

- Penalty notices may be issued by the Local Authority under the following circumstances:
4.1B – Absence from school during term-time in order to take a holiday, where the Headteacher has not authorised the absence and where there have been ten sessions (morning and afternoons count as two sessions) of unauthorised holiday within the immediately preceding 10-week

period. In such a case, each parent may be issued with a separate penalty notice (minimum of £60 per parent) for each child taken out of school.

- Penalty notices can be issued for lateness as follows:

4.1ci – Persistent lateness of a pupil arriving at school after the registers have closed and where there have been ten sessions of unauthorised lateness within the immediately preceding ten-week period.

Absence due to illness

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please contact the school office and give a full explanation as to why your child is absent. Please note that if a child has sickness or diarrhoea, they should not attend school for 48 hours from the last episode of sickness.

For other illnesses, such as colds, there may be instances where your child is well enough to come to school or feels better by mid-morning and would be able to come into school for the afternoon session.

We encourage parents to request medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. If your child is under the weather but not necessarily ill we would ask that you send them into school, making us aware and then we can keep an eye on them and contact you if necessary.

Collection of Children

School Staff need to know who is collecting children at the end of the day. When a child starts school details of parents/carers are collected and kept on file in the school office.

At the start of the school year, staff will establish with the parent or carer the 'normal' collection arrangements for the end of the school day.

Details of who is authorised to collect children will be kept on file. Parents/carers must inform staff of any changes in person or by letter.

Any after school clubs will make sure a record of children attending each time is kept and of who is collecting the child.

At the end of the school day, all children will be taken out as a class by a member of staff and sent to parent, carer when they can be seen.

Parents/carers must send in written confirmation if they wish a Key Stage 2 child to walk home by themselves.

For off-site activities, parents/carers should complete details of collection arrangements on the permission slip.

Lateness

The children can arrive at school from 8:50am. The school day begins at 9am with all external doors and gates being closed at this time.

Children who arrive after 9.00am are late, and must come into school via the main entrance. They must be accompanied to the school office and parents must advise as to why they are late. From here children only will go into school via the office. Continued lateness will lead to further action being taken to discuss the reasons and offer help and support to overcome this.

Registers close at 9:15 and any child arriving after this time is considered absent and this will be marked as an unauthorised lateness absence in the register and will affect your child's attendance level. We would prefer all children to be in their classrooms by 8:55am. Arriving late means that children are not being given the best start to their school day and it often takes them longer to settle down to activities.

The school has a duty under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, to protect children and act in their best interests. The school takes persistent lateness in collecting a child very seriously, although we understand that occasionally, delays are unavoidable.

In the event of a child not being collected, the school will make every effort to contact the child's parents/carers, and if this proves to be impossible, will try to get in touch with an alternative emergency named contact, authorised by the child's parents to collect them on their behalf.

If no contact can be reached, school staff will inform Social Services.

Time off during term time

“Amendments to the 2006 Education(Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations in 2013 removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.”

Therefore, at Rodmarton School:

The Headteacher authorises absence, only under exceptional circumstances after taking into account child's attendance and academic levels.

We ask that parents bear in mind that the reason which may seem good to them may not fall within the exceptional circumstances guidelines and that there is no automatic right to go on holiday each year during term time and that there is no entitlement for leave of absence for your child for a family holiday.

If you believe you do have a genuine reason which is an exceptional circumstance, then you need to write a letter to the Headteacher giving as much notice as possible and stating all details as to why this is an exceptional reason. Once a decision has been made you will be contacted regarding the decision. This will all be done via the school administrator.

In reality, there are few circumstances in which absence for a holiday will be authorized.

The Headteacher will respond to your letter within two weeks, confirming if the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Please remember it is only the Headteacher who can do this.

However, if the holiday is booked or you decide to go away regardless please be aware that the following process will begin on the child's first day of absence:

On the 10 session (5th day) of absence a letter will be posted to your home address advising you are at risk of a penalty notice from the local Authority due to unauthorised absence from school.

If there are any further absences within the next 15 school days after receipt of this letter a penalty notice will be issued.

The letter will also draw your attention to the fact that you may receive a Penalty Notice if your child has anymore unauthorised absence during the next twelve months.

For more information regarding this please visit
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolattendance

Please be advised that the above applies to any time taken of school regardless of whether the school has been informed.

Compulsory School Age: This is the start term following a child's fifth birthday.