The Robert Napier School

Attendance Policy (Students)

Students will achieve most by attending school on a regular basis. Our core aim is to encourage and support students and their families so that student attendance is as close as possible to 100%.

Aims

1. To improve the overall attendance percentage of students at school
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority so that students achieve their maximum potential
3. To provide support and guidance to students and parents/carers in matters relating to attendance and punctuality
4. To provide a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and interpreting attendance and punctuality data
5. To provide and regularly review the system of rewards and sanctions
6. To work closely in an effective partnership with the Attendance Advisory Service in addressing attendance/ punctuality problems
7. To work in an effective partnership with parents/carers
8. To provide a text message home for absent students
9. To provide a school ethos in which students' attendance is valued and their educational advancement recognised as a prime motive amongst all those associated with the school

Objectives

1. The attendance policy aims to work with parents/carers in helping students maintain an excellent school attendance record.
2. To provide students with an awareness of the link between good attendance and good progress.
3. To demonstrate the benefits to students of good attendance
4. To promote knowledge of school attendance and the law
5. To promote a school ethos, which, celebrates excellent attendance
6. To encourage, through excellent attendance, full participation in school life

2. Attendance System

We operate a computer based attendance system overseen by the Attendance Officer, with a dedicated phone line and answer machine so that parents are able to make contact concerning student absence 24 hours a day. Our House Managers attendance on a regular basis and report to the Assistant Headteacher of their House and via them to the Headteacher,

- All staff will take a class register at the start of each lesson, or form time

- The Attendance Officer will contact parents as soon as a student is absent.

- House Managers discuss and analyse attendance statistics weekly, and share good practice within the Student Services team so that appropriate action is taken to improve student attendance.

- The Attendance Advisory Practitioner will issue Penalty warning notices and Penalty notices for students whose attendance falls below 90%, due to unauthorised absence, at the direction of Attendance Officer.

- Continued and regular unauthorised absences with no satisfactory explanation will result in a referral to Robert Napier School's appointed Attendance Advisory Practitioner.

- Random attendance checks will be operated during the day as a deterrent for unauthorised absences from lessons by the House Managers/Directors of Learning and other concerned members of staff.

- Attendance and punctuality is reported termly to parents through the progress review report.

- If students miss a registration they must sign in and bring a note for the form tutor explaining their lateness

- Attendance clinics will be held with students who are persistently absent, and plans put in place by the Attendance Officer/House Manager to support improved attendance using the Student Services Attendance guidelines.

- Persistently absent students will be regularly reviewed by the Attendance Officer/House Managers in liaison with the Attendance Advisory Practitioner.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

- The law of the UK is quite clear about absence from school. In the school register schools must differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence.
- **Authorised** absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be out of school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised. (ref. DFES 0628-2003)
- Parents/carers cannot authorise any absence, only schools can do this. However, parents/carers can provide reasons for absence for the school to consider.
- Parentally-condoned unauthorised absence can be a problem as it means disruption to a child's education. School staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence whether written, telephoned or given in person. Penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised absence.

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- The Robert Napier School Attendance Officer/House Managers will closely monitor attendance and punctuality. Ongoing concerns will result in telephone contact and/or home visits being made to them. Should attendance/punctuality not improve, a referral will be made to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner at an early stage.

Illness, medical and dental appointments
- As far as possible medical appointments should be made outside school hours.
- Medical appointments count as authorised **absence**
- Medical appointments do not necessitate a full day of absence unless substantial travel is required. Proof of time and place of appointment may be requested
- If the authenticity of illness is in doubt the Attendance Advisory Service may in certain circumstances consult the School Health Service, or the student's GP

Lateness to School
All students are required to be punctual to school. Punctuality to school is a legal requirement.
<u>Morning</u> Students must arrive at school at 8.40 a.m. for registration. Students who arrive after this time will be marked `late.' Registers will close at 9.15 a.m. Students who arrive after 9.15 a.m. will receive an unauthorised mark for the morning session. The main gate will be closed at 8.40am. Students arriving after this time will need to sign in at Reception.
<u>Afternoon</u> After lunch students will register in lessons at the start of period 5.

Both attendance and punctuality will be monitored regularly and concerns will be actioned by the Pastoral Team in accordance with their own procedures and, if necessary, reported to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner

Rewards
The school rewards students with excellent attendance in the following ways
- 100% Attendance certificates are awarded each term
- Prizes for the form with the highest attendance

Guidance to Parents
Parents must inform school on the first day a student is absent (by note or phone)

Parents are asked not to take students out of school during term time; this seriously affects their learning

If a child is taken on holiday without permission this will count as an unauthorised absence and will be reported as such on all reports and references. In addition, the child will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) in order for a penalty notice to be issued against each resident parent/carer. (The costs of this will be £60 per notice, if paid within 21 days. Or £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine isn't paid, then this would proceed to court).

In years 7,8,9,10 and 11 Parent/carers will receive a penalty notice when their child has incurred 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a six week period. Penalty notice will be issued to each Parent/carer of £120 each if paid within 28 days or £60 each if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the case of non-payment being prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.

Persistent Absence
If a student's attendance is 90% or below with ten or more unauthorised
Absences, this is termed as persistent absence. The Academy/school works closely with families to ensure that their child does not fall into this category. However, if they

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do there is a stepped response to support the family to improve their child's attendance.

1) Referral to AASSA (Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies)

Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence from school which is unavoidable and regarded as exceptional circumstances and must be requested in writing directly to the Headteacher.

Guidance to Students
Students are encouraged to monitor their own attendance too, and ensure this is as good as possible

Roles and Responsibilities – Staff & AASSA
The Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) works closely with the school and may convene Pre-Proceedings panels to which parents/carers and students are invited, in the event of attendance problems. The Local Authority has powers under the Education Act 1996 to instigate legal proceedings whenever necessary.

The Governing Body
The Governing Body is responsible for ratifying and reviewing the school attendance policy and regularly monitoring attendance and punctuality data.

The Headteacher
- is responsible for implementing the school's attendance policy
- ensures that the policy is notified to all staff and complied with at all levels
- ensures that the policy is made available to all staff appointees and to parents/carers who request to read it
- ensures that the policy is regularly reviewed and, where necessary, revised
- authorises termly attendance reports to the DFE

The Attendance Officer/House Managers
    Are responsible for: -
- the day to day management of student attendance for Years 7-13
    for their house.
- communicating with parents/carers in the event of unauthorised absence
- meeting weekly with the AAP, and keeping a record of the meetings
- producing attendance data or reports as required by the AAP, link Assistant Headteacher (House) or the Headteacher
- producing attendance and punctuality data for the Governing Body
- ensuring that attendance data is updated as a matter of priority on a daily basis

Form Tutors
    Are responsible for: -
- notifying any attendance and punctuality concerns to their House managers.
- taking appropriate action within current guidelines to counteract lateness to class
- discussing with their House Managers/Assistant House Managers or the Head of Department any student(s) in danger of or actually missing out on the benefits of a fulltime education
- celebrating good attendance and punctuality to lessons

All Staff

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Are responsible for:-
- supporting and implementing the policy