Reddish Vale High School

Positively changing lives through personal growth and academic excellence

Attendance Policy

Date Reviewed: September 2026

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RESPECT - ASPIRATION - DETERMINATION - INDEPENDENCE

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1. Introduction

At Reddish Vale High School, we believe that all children and young people have a right to an education as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in UK Law. The opportunities provided by education are fundamental to enabling all children and young people to reach their potential and lead happy and rewarding lives.

Evidence shows that there are clear links between good attendance and high achievement in school. Pupils who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, make progress and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We will work with families to ensure pupils engage in education and maximise their full potential.

This policy outlines our approach to attendance and summarises the legal duties and expectations of the whole school community. It reflects the key principles of the Department for Education's attendance guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and locally agreed processes.

2. Our vision for attendance

Our vision is to nurture well-rounded citizens of the future who are knowledgeable, happy and resilient so that they make a valuable contribution to the world in which they live, and are empowered to make informed and positive life choices. At RVHS our culture of high expectations, warmth and encouragement aims to create good people who will go out into the world and do what is right. We are committed to ensuring that we develop our young people into confident young adults with a strong sense of social responsibility.

Principles

At RVHS we seek to create an environment which encourages and reinforces good behaviour and attendance, removing any barriers that might prevent our pupils from achieving excellent academic results and having successful, happy lives.

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents\carers and school staff share the responsibility for ensuring that educational opportunities are maximised by encouraging good attendance and punctuality to enable pupils to reach their full potential.

We believe that high standards of attendance and punctuality are essential for a successful school and for achieving the school's vision. We also believe that meeting these high standards will have a positive effect on the life of pupils outside of school, encouraging them to become valuable members of the community.

RVHS is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work in partnership with parents/carers, the Local Authority and other relevant services to secure this aim.

3. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

4. Legislation and guidance

"This policy meets the requirements of the statutory Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- **The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**
- **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024** *(and the National Framework for Penalty Notices)*
- The Children Act 1989

This policy also complies with the DfE's data sharing duties and operates in alignment with statutory guidance on **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**, **Children Missing Education (CME)**, and the DfE's school census guidance."

At Reddish Vale High School, we recognise that good school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of all school staff, the governing body, parents, pupils, the local authority and the wider school community.

School
As a school, we will:

- Make improving attendance integral to our wider school improvement efforts, recognising how it connects with the quality of the school's curriculum, behaviour, safeguarding, and our approach to inclusion, well-being and support for disadvantaged pupils.

- Promote the importance of good attendance and set high expectations for every pupil's attendance and punctuality at school
- Communicate these expectations clearly, strongly and consistently to parents and to pupils.
- Record attendance accurately and follow up absences with parents.
- Listen carefully to parents about the reasons why children are not attending regularly to identify and understand the barriers to attendance.
- Make sure staff have a good understanding of attendance-related matters and that the right people are in place to work with parents where attendance is a concern.
- Offer support and make reasonable adjustments where needed to overcome barriers to attendance. These include but are not limited to referral to the school counsellor, support from our Family Liaison Officer, ABSA intervention, EHA referral.
- Work closely with support services and agencies where pupils and families need additional support.
- Analyse attendance information to identify patterns and trends, and use this analysis to target our actions for individual pupils, groups of pupils and at a whole-school level.
- Regularly review our attendance-related messaging, processes and strategies with a view to continued whole-school improvement.

The designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at Reddish Vale High School is Mrs. C. Evans – Deputy Headteacher. Our attendance manager is Miss J. Makinson.

Governing Body

To support our vision for attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure regular ongoing support, guidance, and challenge in relation to attendance, recognising the importance of good attendance and promoting it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Ensure that the school's leadership team fulfil their expectations and the relevant statutory duties as set out in attendance related legislation and guidance.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends, and help the school leadership team focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or groups of pupils who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

Parents

Parents and carers are expected to support the school to improve and maintain high standards of attendance by:

- Ensuring their child attends **every day the school is open**, as required by law, unless an allowable reason for absence applies (such as illness or an authorised leave of absence).

- Ensuring their child arrives at school **on time**.

- **Communicating proactively** with the school at the earliest opportunity if there are any barriers or difficulties preventing their child from attending, so that supportive, collaborative intervention can be put in place.
- Supporting the school's absence procedures:
- Contacting school via ClassCharts every day before 8.30am if their child is unable to attend school due to illness (except where a doctor's report has already been provided indicating an expected return date).
- Providing medical or other evidence in relation to absence if required by the school.
- Arranging medical or dental appointments to take place outside school hours wherever possible.
- Not taking family holidays in term time or any leave of absence for any reason without prior agreement.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances and in advance.
- See section 3 for information on the school's day-to-day absence procedures.
- Raising any issues or concerns affecting attendance with school staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Attending meetings with school staff to discuss concerns if requested by the school.
- Working in partnership with school and other agencies to address any attendance problems.
- Encouraging good routines at home to ensure children are prepared for school each day

5. Absence procedures

Parents
If a pupil is absent from school, parents are expected to:

- Contact school via the ClassCharts app on the first day their child is absent, giving the reason for absence, and on every further day of absence (except where a doctor's report has already been provided indicating an expected return date).
- Ensure that their child returns to school as soon as possible.
- Provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence.
- Proactively contact school for support where they are concerned about their child's attendance by speaking to a member of the attendance team, the child's form tutor or another member of the appropriate year team. This contact can be made via telephone on the main school switchboard, or using the appropriate staff email address.

School
The school will:

- Contact parents by text or telephone on the first day of absence and further days of absence (if we haven't already been notified of the absence)
- If we are unable to make contact this way, we will attempt to reach parents by email,

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letter, use of emergency contacts and home visits where necessary.

- Complete a home visit on the third day of absence.
- On the **10th consecutive day of absence**, your designated attendance lead must report the student as "Missing from School" directly to the **Stockport Children's Services Contact Centre (MASSH)**.
- Make a safeguarding referral to the local authority where there are concerns about the welfare of a child who is not attending school.

6. Late arrival to school

- Pupils are expected to be in school before 8:30am.
- Registers are taken between 8:30am and 8:40am. Pupils will receive a late mark 'L' in the register if they are not in school by that time.
- Children arriving after 8.30am will be signed in by a member of the SLT team at the back gate and remain in the PA block until the start of period 1. They will be issued with a 10 minute detention at breaktime that day. Failure to attend the breaktime detention will result in the pupil being issued with a late detention of 30 minutes that evening and a text home will be sent to notify parents.
- Pupils arriving after 9.05am must arrive through the front gate and will be issued with a 10 minute late detention at breaktime that day. Failure to attend the breaktime detention will result in the pupil being issued a late detention of 30 minutes that evening and a text home will be sent to notify parents.
- The registers will be closed at 9.35am in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations, any pupils arriving after this time will be marked as 'U – late after the registers have closed' in the register for that session. This is classed as an unauthorized absence and counts as half a day absence. This can significantly impact on their attendance.

Parents will be contacted in cases where pupils are regularly late to discuss the reasons for lateness and offer support where appropriate.

Parents should note that unauthorised absences due to lateness could lead to the school making a referral to the local authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings where attempts to improve punctuality have been unsuccessful.

7. Recording of absences

All absences must be recorded in the school register and categorised as either authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence from school

Authorised absence is an absence agreed by the school.

a) Illness

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- Your child should only miss school if either:
    - They are too ill to go in
    - You have advance permission from the school
- There may be other exceptional circumstances where you can take your child out of school and school will consider each application on an individual basis.
- Parents are asked to contact school each day their child is unable to attend school due to illness, except where information from a health professional has been provided indicating an expected return date (see section 3 – absence procedures)
- Where a child or young person has frequent absence due to illness, parents may be asked to attend a meeting in school to agree a medical action plan.
- Parents may also be asked for medical evidence, particularly where absences due to illness are frequent or result in the pupil having long periods of time off school.
- Where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days of school due to illness, they may be entitled to educational provision from their home local authority. In most cases, the school would make a referral where appropriate. We will work in partnership with parents and health professionals to identify and refer pupils entitled to this provision in line with the relevant local authority's policy for children who cannot attend school due to health reasons.

b) Medical/Dental appointments

- Parents are requested wherever possible to make routine medical or dental appointments outside of the school day. However, we understand that hospital appointments and specialist clinic appointments often occur during the school day. Pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

- Where a pupil has an unavoidable medical/dental appointment, parent should provide proof of appointment so that the correct code can be issued. This can be in the form of an appointment card, letter of text message confirming the appointment date and time.

c) Other leave of absence may only be granted in exceptional circumstances

- Parents must put their request in writing in advance to the Headteacher. Exceptional circumstances are one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include but are not limited to; the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, a housing crisis which prevents attendance, a significant safeguarding incident.
- Term time holidays will not be agreed.
- If the absence is not authorised by the head teacher and the child does not attend school, we may request that Stockport Council issues an Education Penalty Notice (see Section 8 - legal sanctions).

d) Other examples of authorised circumstances include:

- Part-time timetables may be agreed only in exceptional cases, for example where medical issues prevent a pupil from attending full time or as part of a re-integration

package. Any part-time timetable agreed should only be used as a temporary arrangement, with full consent of parents and be regularly reviewed with a view to increasing attendance to full- time as quickly as possible.

- Where a pupil is absent from school because of a suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.
- Secondary schools only - Study leave granted by the school for Year 11 pupils during the GCSE examination period.
- When traveler families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another school. (In order to fulfil legal requirements, in such cases, pupils must attend school for at least 200 sessions in every 12 months).

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absences are absences from school for which the school has not given permission, including arriving late at school after the registers have closed. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted by the school.

8. Understanding barriers to attendance

At Reddish Vale High School, we recognise that poor attendance is often a sign of wider difficulties in a child's life whether at home or at school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance or behaviour at school. This may include bereavement, divorce/separation, or other family difficulties; friendship issues; concerns relating to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), medical needs or mental health/anxiety. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Additionally, we recognise that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers and are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with physical or mental health needs, young carers and children with Social Workers. We still maintain high expectations of attendance, but we will be mindful of the way in which additional barriers may affect attendance. Reasonable adjustments will be made and additional support from other services sought where appropriate. These include but are not limited to a referral to the school counsellor, support from our Family Liaison Officer, ABSA intervention, EHA referral.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) – the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO) will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate to support good attendance and that attendance issues are addressed in all assessment and review processes.

Pupils with a Social Worker – we will notify the Social Worker of any concerning unauthorised absences and concerns about attendance/punctuality, and will support them in addressing attendance issues as part of the child or family plan.

Children in Care – the designated teacher will ensure that attendance issues are addressed in Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and in regular looked after review meetings. The Social Worker will be notified of any concerning unauthorised absences and we will contact the relevant Virtual School Headteacher for more support where necessary.

9. Staged Attendance Process

Reddish Vale High School uses a range of methods to identify pupils whose attendance is causing concern including:

- Regular analysis of attendance data by attendance staff, the leadership team and governing body, including vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Regular attendance monitoring meetings between the school's attendance officer, designated SLT attendance lead and relevant teachers/pastoral staff/SENDCO.
- Parental panel meetings with parent/carers, the pupil and the HOY and DHT
- Termly meetings with the local authority's Education Welfare Service to discuss cases where persistent absence is a concern.
- We use Stockport Council's Staged Attendance Process as a framework for our work with individual pupils with low attendance. We recognise that, in most cases, improvement in attendance can be brought about by good communication and strong partnership working between parents, pupils and the school, identifying and addressing the barriers to attendance.
- Offering early help and involving early help services is also an integral part of the staged process in cases where more support is needed to help improve attendance.

Attendance %	Impact:
Tier 4 **Below 90%**	**Serious risk of under achievement** Missing a minimum of 97 lessons a year. A total of 485 lessons from year 7-11. ***Research indicates students who miss more than 30 days of school over the year have only a 20% chance of attaining grades 9-5.***
Tier 3 **90-92% Attendance**	**Severe risk of under achievement** Missing up to 95 lessons a year. A total of 475 lessons from year 7 -11. ***Research indicates 60% or more students who are absent for an average of 15 days per year, fail to achieve 5 or more GCSE passes.***
Tier 2 **93-95% Attendance**	**Risk of under achievement** Missing up to 65 lessons a year. A total of 325 lessons from year 7-11. ***Students with an average attendance of 94.8% tend to achieve only a grade 4 in English and Maths GCSE***
Tier 1 **96-100% Attendance**	**Very little learning missed** Missing up to 38 lessons a year. A total of 190 lessons from year 7-11. ***Education research indicates students who miss less than 7 days of school have an 87% chance of achieving grades 9-5 at GCSE***

How Many Lessons Have I Missed?

Student attendance is crucial to success. Every day of absence equates to missed learning that students will need to catch up on.



Attendance Percentage	Number of hours of learning missed per year
99%	10 Hours missed
97%	30 Hours missed
95%	49 Hours missed
90%	98 Hours missed
80%	195 Hours missed
60%	390 Hours missed
50%	488 Hours missed

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Summary of the Staged Attendance Process

Stage 1 – Attendance cause for concern

- Where attendance has been identified as a concern, we will contact parents to ask about the reasons for absence, try to identify any barriers to attendance and to discuss/offer support where appropriate. Contact may be made by telephone, email, text message or through face-to-face conversations, meetings in school or home visits.
- School staff will also share information to try to identify any concerns or issues that may be affecting attendance, for example any special educational needs or disabilities, medical needs or issues with peers.
- We will attempt to resolve any issues that arise from these conversations and offer support/advice.
- Where medical issues are advised as the reason for absence, we may consider the use of a medical action plan to bring together health information and consider support to increase attendance.
- Where mental health/anxiety about school are identified as the reason for absence, we will offer support, which may include:
    - arranging for a key adult to provide a point of support in school,
    - referral to Anxiety Based School Avoidance intervention programme in school
    - signposting to skilled colleagues in school, online sources of support, the school counselling service, the school nursing service, GP, CAMHS or other mental health services if appropriate such as our MHST.
    - The use of the local authority's Anxiety Based School Avoidance guidance Documents and intervention
- Where there are early indications that a family's support needs may go beyond what the school can offer, we will offer early help through completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHA), a referral to the Team Around the School (TAS) or to specific services that may be able to offer support.
- If there is already an Early Help Assessment or other family assessment in place, we will work with the lead professional to ensure that attendance issues are addressed through the child or family's plan and will carry out any school-related actions.

Stage 2 – School Attendance Meeting

- Where attendance has not improved despite the support offered at Stage 1, or where there are concerns about the level of engagement from parents, we will proceed to Stage 2.
- Parents will be sent a letter outlining concerns about attendance and advising that any further absences will not be authorised unless adequate medical evidence is provided. Parents will also be invited to a School Attendance Panel Meeting.
- Discussion at the meeting will focus on the barriers to attendance and a clear, personalised plan with actions and targets to increase attendance at school will be agreed. A review period will also be agreed.
- Early help support will be offered if previously refused by the parent. A medical action plan and nurse referral may also be considered if parents advise that the absences are

related to medical reasons.

- If the pupil is already in the Team Around the Child (TAC), Team Around the Family (TAF) or Child Protection Process, we will work with the lead professional to ensure that actions to improve attendance are included in the child or family's plan and reviewed through regular multi-agency meetings.
- We will continue to monitor attendance and contact parents to discuss any absences and the progress of the agreed action plan.
- If a pupil has a Social Worker, we will advise them of any unexplained absences.

Stage 3 – Attendance enforcement referral
Stage 3 – Attendance Legal Intervention Referral

If a pupil's attendance has not improved despite the support offered at Stage 1 and Stage 2, the pupil has accumulated **10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period**, and there has been insufficient engagement from parents, the school will make a formal legal intervention referral to **Stockport Council**.

If the referral is accepted by the Local Authority, it will typically result in the service of a formal **Notice to Improve (NTI)**.

- The NTI is a final opportunity for the parent to engage with support and avoid legal action.
- It places the pupil under a strict **15 school-day monitoring window**. If any further unauthorised absences occur during these 15 days, the Local Authority will issue an **Education Penalty Notice (fine)**.

In line with Stockport Council guidelines, a Notice to Improve may be bypassed entirely in cases of deliberate unauthorised term-time leave (holidays), where a penalty notice may be issued immediately. If legal interventions do not improve attendance, or if a third offence occurs within a 3-year rolling period, the Local Authority will proceed directly to **prosecution in the Magistrates' court**

- Emphasis is placed on trying to understand barriers to attendance and put appropriate support in place, with Stage 3 processes only being used where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with.

10. School attendance and the law

Parents

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.
Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
For children receiving full time education at a school, parents have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. Regular attendance means their child must

attend every day that they are expected to attend, except in a small number of allowable circumstances.
If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at the school at which they have been registered the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority (see Section 8 - legal sanctions

Schools
Schools are required by law to:

- Carry out all their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils at the school.
- Maintain and preserve accurate attendance registers as required by regulations (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).
- Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the admissions register, ensuring that:
    - Pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance.
    - Pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 is satisfied.
    - All removals from roll are reported to the local authority.
    - Information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the local authority to locate missing pupils.
- Report pupils who fail to attend regularly and pupils who are continuously absent for 10 days or more without reasonable explanation to the local authority.

11. Legal Sanctions

Regular school attendance is a legal duty on parents and carers. If a parent fails to ensure their child attends school regularly, they are guilty of an offence under section 444(1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996.

A parent who commits this offence may be liable to prosecution in the Magistrates' Court and, depending on which offence they are convicted of, may be liable to a fine of up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to three months.

Although school will offer support in addressing attendance issues, it will also refer pupils whose attendance fails to improve, or who take leave of absence from school without agreement, to the Education Welfare Service within Stockport Council. This can take several routes:

Education Penalty Notice
Education Penalty Notices are fixed penalty notices issued by Stockport Council. Our local council can give each parent a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days.

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From the 2025 to 2026 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period.

If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school. If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Stockport Council's Code of Conduct. There are two types of attendance-related Education Penalty Notice:

- **Education Penalty Notices for Irregular Attendance**
  Before being issued with an Education Penalty Notice, parents will receive a written warning. This gives them an opportunity to avoid a fine by ensuring that no unauthorised absences – including late after the close registration marks – are recorded against their child during the next 15 school days. The minimum criteria for sending such a warning is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a three-month period.

- **Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence**
  Education Penalty Notices may also be issued where a pupil is taken out of school for five days or more without the school's consent – such as for a term time holiday. In these cases, the fine is sent by the Council without an initial warning being issued.

Parent Contract

A Parent Contract is an agreement which usually involves the school, parents, members of Stockport Council's Education Welfare Service and, in some cases, the pupil. The agreement sets out the actions required by all parties to overcome the barriers to improved attendance. Compliance with the contract and the progress of improving attendance are reviewed regularly at Parent Contract Review Meetings. If a parent fails to participate and/or fails to ensure that attendance improves, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

Education Supervision Order

An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring a parent and child to follow directions made in the Order and work alongside a Supervising Officer to improve the child's school attendance. The Supervising Officer will be put in place by Stockport Council and may be a Social Worker, Education Welfare Officer or other early help professional. Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under an ESO, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. ESOs usually last for a year, but can be extended to up to three years.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and annually by Mrs. C. Evans, Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Governing Board.

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to, and should be read in conjunction with, the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Children Missing Education (CME) Policy**
- **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** *(incorporating Emotionally Based School Avoidance support)*
- **Suspension and Exclusion Policy**