Ruislip Gardens Primary School

Attendance Policy (pupils)

Schools HR Policy	**Yes**	**No ✔**
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Signature		
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Introduction

Attendance at school is clearly an important pre-requisite for a successful and fulfilling school career. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children and young people. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

It is recognised that pupils may have difficulties attending regularly for a variety of complex and often inter-related reasons. These may include:

- The pupils' educational, social and emotional development;
- The pupils' medical history;
- Social, economic and cultural considerations within the family and community;
- Factors operating within the school;
- Availability of appropriate support from statutory and voluntary agencies within the community.

It follows that the Local Authority, schools, parents/carers, pupil and the community at large need to work collaboratively in order to maximise attendance. A positive approach is needed which promotes access to education within an ethos which values learners, promotes equal opportunities and encourages the involvement of pupils and their parents/carers.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

Through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, we aim to:

- Achieve whole-school attendance of at least 96.5%, with an aspiration towards 97%;
- Promote a culture where every day and every minute of learning matters;
- Reduce persistent absence (attendance below 90%);
- Promote excellent punctuality;
- Identify attendance concerns early and work in partnership with families;
- Ensure every pupil accesses the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Remove barriers to attendance through timely support and intervention.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers;
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority;
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos;
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources;
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs;
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most;
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge;
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs;
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance;
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer so that staff understand:

    - The importance of good attendance;
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues;
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers;
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school;
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Mrs Ward / Mrs White to be able to do so;
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers;
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan has falling attendance or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs;
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels;
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times;
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days;
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school;
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance;
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis;
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance;

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making sure they are followed by all staff;
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed;
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues;
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers;
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families;

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Ward and she can be contacted via the school office.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7);
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher;
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence;
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Mrs White and she can be contacted via the school office.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers will:

- Record attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1) and submitting this information to the school office;
- Promote good attendance, monitor emerging concerns and communicate with families promptly.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system;
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance officer / designated senior leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;

- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them).

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time;
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence and (on days 3 and 5 of absence) and advise when they are expected to return;
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child;
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day;
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the attendance officer (Mrs White) or designated senior leader (Mrs Ward) via the school office.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time;
- Listen to their parents / carers and the school;
- Communicate with parents / carers and school about any worries or anxieties;
- Go to bed at an appropriate time, come to school punctually and ready to learn.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- Absent;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry;
- The amended entry;
- The reason for the amendment;
- The date on which the amendment was made;
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not;
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity;
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for six years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 Timings for the School Day

Pupils must arrive in school by the drop off time on each school day.

Morning drop off details:

- 8.25am – Gates open;
- 8.30am – Bell for EYFS will ring;
- 8.35am – Bell for Years 1-6 will ring.
- 8.40am – Gates 1 & 2 close;
- 8.45am – Drop off zone closes;
- 8.50am – Gate 5 closes.

Pupils arriving after 8.50am must enter via the school office and be signed in before joining their class.

Pupils arriving after the register closes will receive the appropriate DfE attendance code. The register for the first session will be taken in class at 8.45am and will be kept open by the office until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm.

End of the school day:

- Gates open at 3.00pm;
- EYFS are dismissed from gate 2 at 3.00pm;
- Years 1-6 are dismissed on the back playground at 3.10pm (parents can access the playground via gate 1 or 5;
- Gate 2 closes at 3.10pm;
- Gates 1 and 5 close at 3.20pm.

Children who have not been collected by the relevant gate closure time will be taken to the school office, where they will remain supervised until they are collected. A late pick up charge may apply.

See Appendix 2 for a summary of our drop off and collection procedures.

4.2 Unplanned absence

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the school before 9.30am or as soon as possible on the first day of absence to notify us of the reason for your child's absence;
- Contact the school on days 1, 3 and 5 of your child's absence. The Attendance/Welfare Officer may make a call home during the period of absence to seek additional information or clarity if this is required.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The Department for Education has provided revised guidelines on medical absences and now suggest that a child with persistent sickness or diarrhoea should remain absent from school for 48 hours from the last period of vomiting and then may return provided they are well enough to attend. If they vomit once due to travel sickness, coughing or running around just after eating the exclusion period may be reduced to 24 hours, providing there are no other symptoms

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance and provides proof of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours, where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Regular lateness can have a detrimental effect on:

- The child's learning;
- The learning of others;
- The child's sense of belonging;
- The child's behaviour.

A pupil who arrives late:

- If a child has not been registered by 9am, they are deemed to be late and this will be recorded in the register;
- If arriving after 8.50am, children will also need to be signed in at the school office.

The close of the register is 9.30am and after this time, it is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the designated senior leader and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

We monitor late collection from the school premises at the end of the school day. Names of such pupils are recorded and the reason for the late collection must be recorded on each occasion. The school will invite parents to meet with them to discuss late collection of pupils if it becomes frequent or a pattern emerges. A letter will be sent home once a child is collected late from school on two or more occasions and a charge of £10 will be added to the family's Parent Pay account. Further late collections will result in a second letter and a charge of £10 for each 30 minutes or part of 30 minutes that the child is waiting for collection. Letter template can be found in Appendix 3.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not;
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent;
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer;
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance;
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals;
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful or not engaged with, we will refer the matter to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council. You may then be at risk of a Penalty Notice. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via: face to face or phone call conversation, email, parents' evenings and through letters 1 – 3, depending on the level of attendance.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a maximum of two days leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad;
- Study leave to take an examination;
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable;
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be made as soon as it is anticipated, in person, with the Headteacher. Paper/online applications will not be accepted.

Please note that it is the advice and guidance of the London Borough of Hillingdon that although such requests can be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion, the rule of thumb is that such requests are refused or recorded as unauthorised absence. A child's prior attendance at school will be a factor in the decision-making process.

Patterns of absence from previous years are carefully scrutinised. Requests for exceptional leave are kept in the pupil's school file and passed from school to school, whether it is primary, secondary school or an academy.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail);
- Religious observance – The school will authorise two days per academic year where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart;
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision;
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school;
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority;
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements or because the school premises are closed.

Where leave is authorised the Headteacher will notify you in writing of the decision and will confirm the number of days that have been authorised. Repeat applications for exceptional leave may result in your case being referred to The Participation Team.

5.2 Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. Unauthorised absences are recorded with an O code. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however, this is not exhaustive):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Absences at the start and end of the school term around school holidays;
- Absences which present a pattern e.g. absences around weekends, birthdays;
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (code U) without providing a valid reason;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays in term time;
- Excessive illness without medical evidence;

- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, please speak to us rather than report your child as unwell and we will work with you to resolve any issues that may be affecting attendance.

5.3 Filming and performance requests

The Local Authority will issue a Performance Licence based on information provided by the school. A maximum of 5 days filming per academic year will only be authorised providing the pupil's attendance is over 90% and they are making expected levels of progress. Any request which exceeds 5 days will be recorded as unauthorised and the Local Authority will be advised accordingly, which may result in the decline of the Performance Licence. When the initial request for filming is received, a letter will be issued to parents/carers detailing how many days are authorised and the date and number of days taken for filming or performances will be recorded on the child's attendance record.

5.4 Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system. All our PA pupils and their parents are offered support which includes: allocation of additional support through a mentor or a teaching assistant, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

5.6 Children Missing in Education

Children who are on roll at a school but refusing to attend, failing to attend regularly, missing from home or are poor or non-attenders will be managed by an allocated Participation Officer. Children whose whereabouts are not known or not confirmed are classified as Children Missing from Education (CME) and are dealt with after initial enquiries by colleagues from the CME Team. Pupils who have a 10-day consecutive unexplained absence will be reported to the Participation Team on the monthly report.

5.7 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks);
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil;

- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution;
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first five days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences;
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996;
- Details of the support provided so far;
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with;
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis;
- A clear timeframe of between three and six weeks for the improvement period;
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum level of attendance for Ruislip Gardens School is 97% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress towards this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in Hillingdon. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any

projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletters and we ask for your full support.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

- Mrs White, Welfare and Attendance Officer;
- Mrs Ward, Assistant Headteacher, Teaching and Learning;
- Miss Bulpett, Headteacher.

To help promote good attendance we will:

- Celebrate good attendance by monitoring class weekly attendance visibly around the school;
- Award the attendance cup to the class with the highest attendance each term;
- Award stickers and certificates to children with good attendance each half term;
- Inform you if your child's attendance or punctuality falls below the acceptable level for our school;
- Give parents/carers details about attendance in our regular newsletter;
- All parents will be notified in mid and end of year reports about their child's attendance and punctuality.

The Attendance Support Team:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to The Attendance Support Team from the Local Authority. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices (currently £80 rising to £160 if unpaid after 21 days. If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice) or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A).

"If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence."

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact The Attendance Support Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01895 250858 or email: attendancesupport@hillingdon.gov.uk

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We understand that barriers to attendance for our pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are complex and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits;
- Take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches;
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all;
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance;
- Working collaboratively with the local authority, as well as other agencies;
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time

education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We have high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and in line with our SEND policy, the school will work with pupils and parents to put in additional support and adjustments, ensuring the provision outlined in their Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is accessed. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect acquisition of learning because of the patterns established. This is especially true for the young person with autism. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

- Parents, class teacher and SENCO will meet to identify the barriers to good school attendance. If appropriate, the child's views will also be gathered;
- Identify a key adult to work with the child and family to explore the positive and negative influences on absenteeism and build resilience;
- School based interventions may be offered, such as morning clubs, play therapy, mentoring sessions or providing a limited part-time timetable so the child can build success;
- External Interventions may be offered: referrals to Primary Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Early Help/Family Support Services;
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and class staff.

Where a pupil has an EHCP and their attendance falls or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

As soon as parents have informed the school of the expected date of return:

- The class teacher will organise a welcome pack back for the child to receive before they return. It may include: messages from the class, timetable for their first day back, a reading book;
- Designated Senior Leader and Attendance Officer will meet with the parents (and child if appropriate) in advance of the first day to discuss expectations, reasonable adjustments and individual health care/support plans that may be in place;
- Soft start: parents/child will be given the option to arrive through the school office, where an adult known to them will welcome the child;
- Buddy: a child will be appointed as their buddy. The buddy will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions;
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff;
- Morning clubs and play therapy sessions will be available to support the child's return.

8. Attendance monitoring

The designated senior leader and attendance officer meet weekly to analyse the attendance data, identifying any trends within or across year groups, core groups of children (PP, SEND, EAL), persistent absentees and requests for absence leave. Actions are put in place and followed up on a weekly basis.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data weekly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance;
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence;
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends;
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The School will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis;
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below);
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead);
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies;
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school;
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance;

    - Explain the help that is available;
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence;
    - Review any existing actions or interventions.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant;
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence;
- Provide a morning pastoral club to encourage children to attend and settle before the start of the day;
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above).

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually, by the designated senior leader. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy;
- Behaviour policy.

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

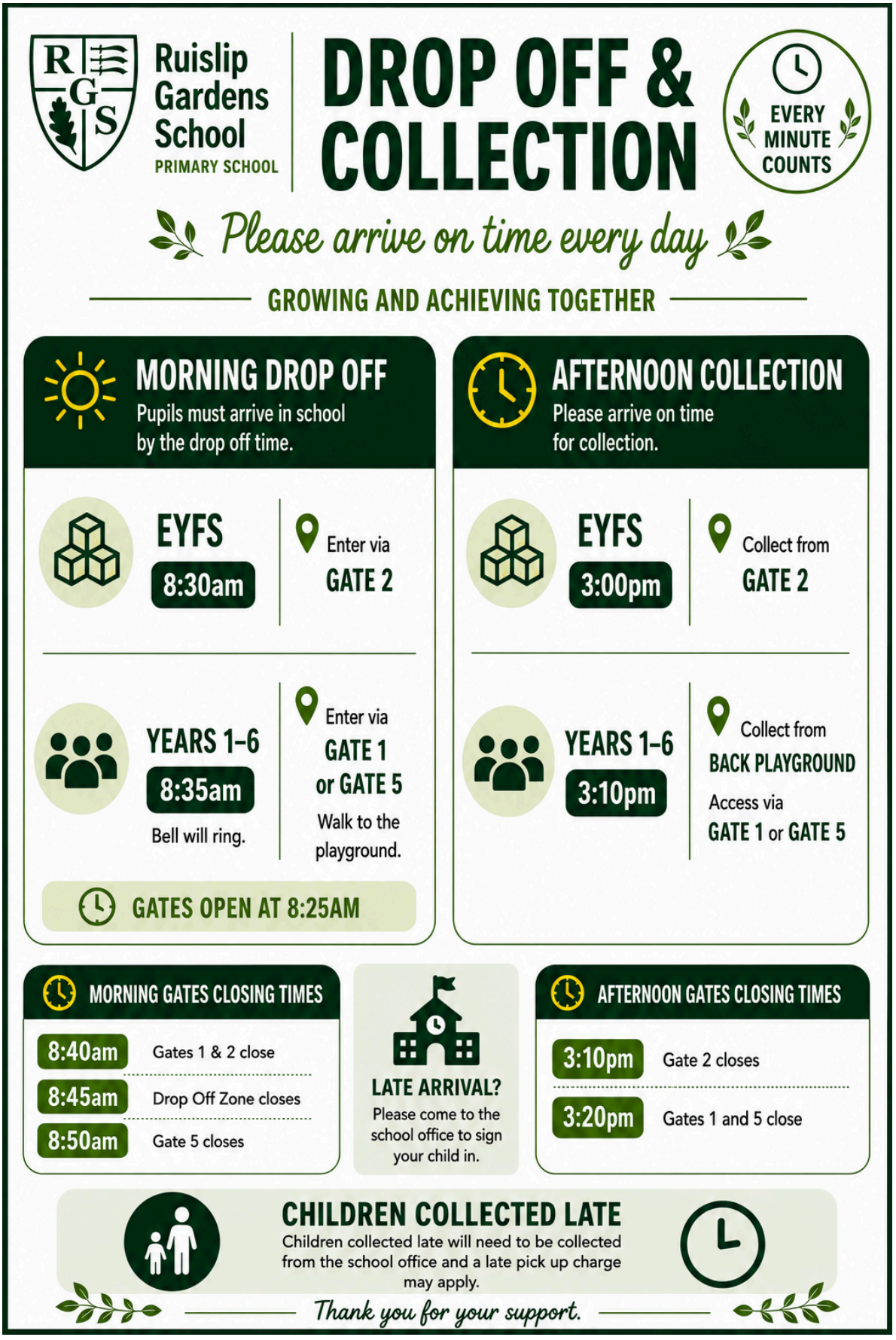
The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are:

		• In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: Drop off and collection information



Appendix 3: Attendance letter 1

Ruislip Gardens Primary School

DOB……. Name…….

RE: Attendance below 97%

Dear……,

We are concerned about …… attendance. Our records show that ……. current attendance is …..%.

As you are aware we want parents' support to improve attendance so if there are any issues please get into contact with me, as we may be able to help and discuss any issues you may be having with getting ……. into school.

As a result of …… poor attendance, we have to initiate our attendance monitoring procedures.

Please be aware that if this continues then we will have no other option but to invite you for a formal attendance panel. You are then at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence.

This is a fine of £80 per parent per child if paid in the first 21 days, from days 22 to 28 the fine doubles to £160 for each penalty notice.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Bulpett

Headteacher

Headteacher Miss N Bulpett Stafford Road, Ruislip HA4 6PD. Telephone No: 01895 632895

Email: officeemail@ruislipgardensschool.co.uk Website: www.ruislipgardensschool.co.uk

Appendix 3: Attendance letter 2

Ruislip Gardens Primary School

Child's name and DOB

RE: Attendance between 92% to 90%

Dear Mr and Mrs

Following my previous letter sent on (enter date), we are disappointed that there has been no significant improvement in (Child's name) attendance.

Our records show that your child's current attendance is **%.

It is important that children attend school regularly and on time. Here at Ruislip Gardens Primary School, our best interests are to ensure our pupils reach their full potential which can only be done when pupils attend school regularly. Once again, we are giving you the opportunity to discuss any issues you may be facing with getting your child(ren) into school. We would like to understand the challenges that are preventing (child's name) attending school full time and would like to support you to affect a sustained improvement.

We are offering a meeting with our Welfare and Attendance Officer, Mrs White and our Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Ward on (enter date and time). Please get in contact with us if you cannot attend to arrange a more mutually convenient time.

Please note, you may be asked for medical evidence for future absences in order that they can be authorised.

Please be aware that if this continues then we will have no other option but to pass this matter on to the School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council. You may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely,

Miss Bulpett

Headteacher

Headteacher Miss N Bulpett Stafford Road, Ruislip HA4 6PD. Telephone No: 01895 632895

Email: officeemail@ruislipgardensschool.co.uk Website: www.ruislipgardensschool.co.uk