New Rush Hall School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed:

October 2026

Due for review:

October 2027

At New Rush Hall School (NRHS) we believe that pupils should attend every day if they are to maximise the opportunities that the school provides. For many pupils, their academic attainment and emotional, behavioural and social problems are exacerbated by erratic attendance.

- School starts at 8.45am for Secondary pupils and 9.15am for Primary pupils.
- Pupils are marked late if they arrive more than 1 hour after these times, except in the case of pupils where there has been a problem with home-to-school transport.
- The registers are marked electronically following input by teachers to a school secretary at the beginning of the day. This is generally completed by 9.30am.
- Tutors refer non-attendance in the first instance to a secretary who will contact parents/carers. S/he then compiles a list of absent pupils, together with reason for absence and follow-up actions. This is sent to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Heads of Department and the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO), daily.
- Letters or phone messages explaining absence are dated and signed by the tutor and sent to the school office where they are scanned and put in the child's file.
- As part of the admission procedure, parents/carers agree to send their child to school every day or notify the school in advance of a known absence.
- Pupils engaged in 'approved educational activities' not at NRHS are marked accordingly in the register as present but educated elsewhere. This is particularly important since many children attend mainstream schools on a sessional basis.
- The school office staff will contact the parents/carers of all pupils where no explanation for absence has been given. This happens daily. Pupils will be given the code of unauthorised absence unless a medical appointment letter is provided as proof of absence.
- A list of absent pupils and the outcome of the phone call is logged on a proforma and a copy given to the SLT.
- Where phone calls have been unsuccessful in eliciting a response, the school will write to parents/carers after the second day's absence, to express concern at the absence and ask them to provide an explanation.
- One of the school's Deputy Heads liaises fortnightly with the designated EWO to discuss attendance and the welfare concerns. The EWO monitors individual pupils' attendance and whole school trends. S/he will visit parents/carers to discuss difficulties and as appropriate will initiate court proceedings. In line with national guidelines, the EWO and school monitor the attendance of persistent absentees – i.e., those whose attendance is below 90%.
- Supervision Orders issued by the court are also monitored by the EWO.
- The school keeps detailed information on the attendance of all pupils and records types of absence and lateness. If pupils arrive late to school, they are required to report to the school office and sign the Late Book, give their time of arrival along with the reason for lateness. Pupils arriving late will be required to make up the time in detention at break time or at the end of the school day, depending on transport arrangements. Where pupils consistently arrive late, the school will contact parents/carers and invite them in to discuss the difficulties
- Where appropriate. In extreme cases, persistent latecomers are referred to the EWO. Parents/carers can be issued with a penalty notice for persistent lateness.
- The school is mindful of its duty in loco parentis and responds promptly if pupils abscond. In the case of Primary pupils, an adult will always go after the child, and the police and parents/carers are informed immediately if the child fails to return. When Secondary pupils leave the premises, mostly staff are aware of this and it is a cooling-off mechanism. However, staff are mindful of a child's age and vulnerability. If Secondary pupils do not return after twenty minutes the school informs the parents/carers and the police and completes an Abscond Form for police to collect. Pupils absconding are asked to come into school with their parents/carers the following day. Should the pupil return to school, the parents/carers and police are informed as soon as possible. Otherwise, the matter is considered to remain within the jurisdiction of the police.

- Full attendance is promoted in the school in a number of ways. 100% attendance is the school aim, which is published and promoted throughout the school along with incentives. Pupils whose attendance is 110% receive 15 commendations per half term. This group of pupils will also receive an attendance certificate for their excellent school attendance. A print-out of pupil attendance is provided and discussed in reviews and targets set. A child's percentage attendance and authorised/unauthorised absence forms a benchmark for measuring attendance in the following term.
- Rates of attendance are presented to governors each term with comparative data.
- The LA does not support parents/carers in taking pupils out of school in term-time. The governors have agreed that, in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers wishing to take their children on holiday during term-time may make a written request to the Headteacher, to give prior notice and complete a form to that effect.