



The Trent-Rylands Federation



Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School *and* Beeston Rylands Junior School

POLICY for Attendance

- THIS DOCUMENT IS a statement of the aims and principles of the Trent-Rylands Federation, for ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance
- IT WAS DEVELOPED in 2023 through a process of consultation with staff and governors
- IT WILL BE continuously reviewed, updated and approved by the Governing Body and Headteacher
- This policy will be REVIEWED ANNUALLY

Date of review	Autumn 2024	Autumn 2025	Autumn 2026
Signed			

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1. Introduction

At The Trent-Rylands Federation, we expect good attendance and punctuality from all of our children, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which everyone connected to our school feels proud of their identity, and able to participate fully in school life.

Children should attend school every day as good attendance promotes successful learning and the good habits needed for the responsibilities of adult life, especially in the workplace.

All school staff will work with children and their families to ensure every child attends school daily and punctually.

To meet these objectives, we will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with parents and appropriate agencies to provide information, advice and support. We will also keep the profile of attendance high across school to emphasize the importance of good attendance for all children.

Catherine Turner at Beeston Rylands Junior School and Janine Barratt at Trent Vale Infant School is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

2. Key Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of children in school.
- To ensure everyone in our school community recognises the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To promote a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality among children and families, providing support and advice where needed.
- To ensure a warm and welcoming environment into which children and parents come each day.

3. Legal Framework

It is important for parents and carers to understand that there is a statutory obligation for children to attend school. Section 444 a and Section 444 1a of the Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child(ren) attend school on every day the school requires them to do so. Failure to do so is a criminal offence which leads to a prosecution or a Penalty Notice fine. The Trent-Rylands Federation and the Local Authority also have a legal obligation to ensure a child(ren) attends school.

4. Parental Responsibility

The definition of parent for the purpose of this policy is any person who has day-to-day care of the child at the time school attendance is required. This can include other family members such as grandparents, or families where partners are not natural parents. In cases where parents have separated both parents are still liable for ensuring regular school attendance under legislation, even though one of the parents may not live with the child. **The Local Authority views persistent absenteeism as educational neglect.**

- Parents and carers are required to ensure that their children receive full time education and are therefore primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school every day.
- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children:
 - Attend school every day
 - Arrive at school on time in uniform and ready to learn
 - Are absent only for reasons that can be authorised.

5. School's Responsibility

- It is the school's responsibility to check and monitor school attendance regularly and effectively, and to inform parents of their child(ren)'s attendance levels. It is vital that registers are taken carefully; making sure that mistakes are not made. It is also a responsibility to report to governors on the overall attendance of children and that of particular groups of children.
- It is the school's responsibility to have a clear attendance policy that is understood by all staff (and parents / pupils).
- Regular monitoring and analysis of attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance.
- Weekly tracking to be shared with teachers and SLT to ensure that all staff are working towards the same goal of good attendance and punctuality.

School Registration

Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School

Morning: - 8.50am – 12.00pm

Afternoon: - 1.00pm – 3.20pm

Children are expected to be in their classrooms when school starts at 8.50am. The class teacher will take the register as soon as the children are settled in their classroom.

The gates to the playground will be locked at 9.00am. Any child arriving after this time must enter the school at the main reception where they will be registered by a member of the office staff.

Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent. If they arrive after the register has been submitted to the office but before 9.20 am they will be marked as present but late. Arrival after 9:20 will be marked as a half day's absence, indicated by a 'U' in the register.

Beeston Rylands Junior School

Morning: - 8.55am – 12.00pm (school opens for pupils from 8.45am)

Afternoon: - 1.00pm – 3.25pm

Children are expected to be in their classroom when school starts at 8.55am. The class teacher will take the register as soon as the children are settled in their classroom.

The gates to the school from the road will be locked at 9.00am. Any child arriving after this time must be supervised into school by office staff who will register them.

Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent. If they arrive after the register has been submitted to the office but before 9.25 am they will be marked as present but late. Arrival after 9:25 am will be marked as a half day's absence, indicated by a 'U' in the register.

Codes

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B*	Attending any other approved educational activity Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration	Attendance Not Required
E	Excluded or Suspended without alternative provision	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K*	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Attendance Not Required
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Attendance Not Required
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Attendance Not Required

Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Attendance Not Required
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Attendance Not Required
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Attendance Not Required
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Attendance Not Required
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law.	Attendance Not Required
Y7*	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Attendance Not Required
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Attendance Not Required

Pupil Absence

We ask parents and carers to help the school by notifying us of the reason for any absence and the child's likely return date, by 9:30am. Studybugs software has been adopted by the Trent-Rylands Federation. This is the preferred way to inform school of your child's absence. The communication platform allows parents to use an app to inform school of pupil absence.

<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>

The school office can still be notified of absence. This may be done by email

office@trentvale.notts.sch.uk or office@rylands.notts.sch.uk

Alternatively, parents and carers can contact the school office for Trent Vale on: 0115 9179224 or Beeston Rylands on 0115 9178355.

If no notification has been given regarding a child's absence, a member of the office team will contact the parent or carer for a reason. Absences will be unauthorised until a reason is provided. Emergency contacts may be contacted and home visits may be carried out as part of safeguarding procedures. If school is unable to make contact to establish why a child is absent then the police will be contacted to ensure that everyone in the family is safe.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences will be given where no reason for absence is obtained from parents or carers and for the following reasons:

- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives
- Being unable to get up in the morning.
- Shopping trips
- Birthdays
- Hair appointments
- Family holidays that do not meet the exceptional circumstances criteria
- Regular illness where no medical evidence is forthcoming
- Patterns of non-attendance e.g. every Friday

Appointments during the School Day

The school encourages parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. We recognise that this is not always possible with some appointments especially with specialist services such as a Paediatrician, Speech and Language Therapy, CAMHS etc. For children who have appointments during school hours, parents or carers should provide a record of their appointment. These appointments will be authorised.

Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality

Studybugs software has been adopted by the Trent-Rylands Federation. This enables school to continually monitor absence via a whole school approach taking into account pastoral care, wellbeing, health and attendance.

Individual children's attendance is monitored regularly for:

- Patterns of unexplained absences
- Persistent absences or persistent lateness
- Any patterns of authorised absence

Response to the above absences is undertaken initially in the form of Studybugs notifications. This is to ensure that parents/carers are regularly informed about their child's attendance. Where necessary letters and meetings with parents and carers will be held. Conversations with parents and carers here are of upmost importance to clarify why absence is occurring and how we can support the family. An action plan may be created in partnership with the family and any outside

agencies to support the child.

We aim to work with families to support attendance but, if necessary, this is escalated to the Local Authority for further support and action. This is led by the head teacher.

Attendance audits are carried out weekly with specific focus on children whose attendance is lower than 90%, which makes them a persistent absentee. Audits are carried out for all children in school including nursery. Separate audits are carried out for punctuality.

In addition:

- Parents are informed of the whole school attendance for the half term via the half termly newsletter.
- Individual attendance is shared with parents and carers via Studybugs, half termly letters and end of year reports.
- Whole school, persistent absentees and disadvantaged pupils are reported to the Governors termly.

Ongoing Poor Attendance - Support for children and families

Parental engagement is key. The school has put a range of interventions and support in place and works closely with parents and carers to improve low school attendance. Support from SLT will be offered via telephone calls, meetings in and out of school as appropriate depending upon the needs of the parent/carer. If necessary an action plan will be drawn up, which will include the views of all parties, including the child if appropriate.

School will support families in attendance via a number of possible strategies:

- For children who may refuse to come to school, mentoring will be put into place. Support will be given to a child over a 10 week period. Work around the child's safe places in school, the parts of the day that they enjoy and the lessons they like will be explored. Part time timetables can be used with a view to being full time as and when possible.
- For school refusers, the drivers that cause the child to refuse to come to school will be explored and thought through.
- Explicit teaching around social and emotional well being. Teaching children how to be resilient with exploration around anxiety and how this is felt by everyone and how we can work to overcome it. If anxiety appears to be excessive and prolonged then agencies will be contacted for further support.
- Meet and greet will be offered as a soft start to the school day with the class teacher or a teaching assistant to build positive relationships with the child.
- Children whose attendance has improved will receive a reward in the form a certificate – this will not be over a fixed period of time but over a short period of time.
- Buddy systems in place to ensure that children have support socialising if this is needed.
- A referral to Early Help support maybe made if parents require parenting support.

Continued Poor Attendance

If attendance does not improve after these procedures have been followed, or if parents and carers fail to engage with the school, then a penalty notice will be considered by the Headteacher/SLT. If this fails to have an impact then a referral will be made to the Local Authority who will implement their own procedures. The Local Authority may pursue cases of poor attendance through legal action and courts. They consider 10 sessions (half days) unauthorised absences within any given 10-week period as persistent absence.

Holidays during Term Time

Parents and carers may request a leave of absence using the school's request form which will be considered by the head teacher and school attendance team. If the reason for absence falls into the exceptional circumstances criteria set by the individual school's governing body, then the absence will be authorised. Exceptional circumstances which **may** be discussed and agreed by the governing body are:

- For those parents or carers who work in the Services or Police Force
 - For family funerals or a significant bereavement
 - For a family wedding day, not a holiday after the wedding
 - For religious observance
 - For visits back to a child's country of origin depending on the circumstances.
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- If the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is of 5 days (10 sessions) or more in total over a 10 week rolling period, then the school can issue or request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom unauthorised absence applies.
 - The standard of evidence required will be the same as that required for court cases brought under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.).
 - The evidence should include a warning to the parent(s) alerting them that a PN may be issued or requested should an unauthorised absence occur that meets the threshold.
 - Where a penalty notice is unpaid within the 28 day deadline, it will be necessary for the person who issued a penalty notice to provide evidence for the court case by way of a Section 9 Statement (a witness statement admissible in court under the Criminal Justice Act and the Magistrates' Courts Act and Rules).
 - An Enforcement Lead from the Family Service will consult with the person providing the Section 9 Statement and offer guidance as required and arrange for the Section 9 Statement to be completed in the appropriate format.
 - If the defendant requests the author of a Section 9 Statement to be present at the court hearing the Local Authority will notify the person concerned as soon as such a request is made.

Persistent Absence (PA)

Once a child has accrued 5 days (10 sessions) of **unauthorised absence** over a 10 week rolling period, whether the unauthorised absence relates to a family holiday or is more general in nature, the head teacher can ask the Local Authority to issue an Education Penalty Notice to each parent or carer for each child to whom persistent absence applies (see Appendix B/D: Penalty Notice). The school can also request that the Local Authority issue an Education Penalty Notice when a child is persistently late and where they are signified as a 'U' in the attendance register (see Appendix B/D: Penalty Notice).

Issuing a Penalty Notice

A penalty notice is a suitable intervention in circumstances where the parent is judged capable of securing their child's regular punctuality and attendance but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so. This includes where families take a holiday during term time. In the vast majority of instances, penalty notices will be the last resort where all other efforts to address non-attendance or poor punctuality have failed.

The penalty is £160 per child per parent if paid within 28 days, but reduces to £80 per child per parent if paid within the first 21 days. There is no right of appeal by parents and carers against a Penalty Notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period, the Local Authority must decide whether to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. This could lead to a fine of up to £1000 per parent and carer per child.

If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour, they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, Nottinghamshire County Council will escalate to prosecution through the Magistrates Court.

Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education can be an indication of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children who are missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in the future.

Schools are required to make the Local Authority aware of any child who fails to attend school regularly and why a child is absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Leads work closely with all school staff to manage risks to children. They make sure the appropriate agencies are involved so that children receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

OTHER POLICY DOCUMENTS THAT UNDERPIN THIS POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE

- ANTI BULLYING POLICY
- SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY
- PUPIL DISCIPLINE and BEHAVIOUR
- EQUALITY POLICY
- WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

