



ROSSETT ACRE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Strategy and Parent Guide

Supporting belonging, wellbeing and regular attendance so every child can thrive

Our Vision: Excellence and Happiness for All

A supportive, inclusive and legally compliant approach to improving attendance.



September 2026

Rossett Acre Primary School

Attendance Strategy and Parent Guide

Helping your child to make the most of school and ensuring they receive the education they are entitled to.

Document History

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Introduction

Aims

At Rossett Acre Primary School, we believe every child deserves to feel safe, known and ready to learn. By working together on attendance, we aim to:

- Ensure children feel a strong sense of belonging in their class and school community.
- Build connections and friendships that support wellbeing and learning.
- Give every child the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Our One Life PSHE approach helps children and families develop belonging, connectedness, wellbeing and healthy routines that support regular attendance.

Our Attendance Expectations

Rossett Acre Primary School expects every child to attend school every day and on time unless there is a valid reason for absence. Attendance is a safeguarding, inclusion and achievement priority. We will promote a culture where children feel safe, happy, known and ready to learn, while working with families early to understand and remove barriers to regular attendance.

- Pupils are expected to arrive between **8.40am** and **8.50am**, ready for registration and learning.
- Parents and carers must report absence to the school office by **8.45am** on each day of absence, giving a clear reason.
- School will monitor attendance regularly through Arbor and CPOMS and will contact families promptly where attendance, punctuality or absence patterns become a concern.
- Our first response will be supportive: we will listen, identify barriers and agree practical actions with families before any legal route is considered.

This strategy has been updated with reference to the Red Kite Learning Trust Attendance Policy, the Department for Education statutory guidance, *Working together to improve school attendance*, and the DfE summary of responsibilities for school attendance. It should be read alongside the RKLTLT Attendance Policy, Rossett Acre safeguarding procedures and Local Authority attendance arrangements. The Trust Attendance Policy will sit at the centre of the school's approach, with this guide providing Rossett Acre's school-specific procedures and support offer for parents/carers.

Legal Framework

This strategy is informed by the current legal framework and statutory guidance for school attendance in England. Rossett Acre Primary School will apply this framework proportionately, fairly and with a support-first approach, while recognising that regular attendance is both a legal expectation and a safeguarding priority.

- **Education Act 1996:** places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or

otherwise. It also provides the legal basis for action where a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly.

- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024:** set out requirements for admission and attendance registers, attendance codes, recording absence, preserving records and granting leave of absence.
- **Working together to improve school attendance:** statutory DfE guidance setting out the expectations for parents/carers, schools, academy trusts, governing bodies and local authorities, including early identification, support for pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence, and legal interventions where support is not effective, not engaged with or not appropriate.
- **Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance:** DfE statutory guidance summarising the shared responsibilities of parents/carers, schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities.
- **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended:** provide the framework for penalty notices for unauthorised absence, including the national threshold, payment amounts and escalation arrangements.
- **Keeping children safe in education:** statutory safeguarding guidance which underpins the school's duty to respond to absence, missing education and wider welfare concerns as part of safeguarding practice.
- **Children missing education:** statutory guidance which supports school and Local Authority responsibilities when a child's whereabouts, education provision or access to suitable education may be unclear.
- **Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school:** statutory guidance which informs support for pupils whose physical or mental health needs may affect attendance.

The school will also follow relevant RKLТ policies, Local Authority procedures and safeguarding processes. Where national, Trust or local guidance is updated, this strategy will be reviewed and amended as required. Leaders will consult appropriately on school-specific attendance information and ensure it remains parent-friendly, accessible and up to date.

Roles and Responsibilities at Rossett Acre

Role	Responsibility
Headteacher/Inclusion Manager / Senior Attendance Champion	Acts as the school's Senior Attendance Champion, provides strategic leadership for attendance, ensures attendance is linked to safeguarding and inclusion, reviews vulnerable pupil groups and oversees escalation where support is not improving attendance.
Attendance Officer / Learning Mentor	Monitors attendance, follows up absence, records actions on Arbor/CPOMS, works with families and coordinates early support.
Class teachers and school staff	Promote positive attendance, welcome pupils back after absence, notice emerging patterns and share concerns promptly.
Parents and carers	Ensure children attend every day and on time, report absence by 8.45am, provide information requested by school and work with school to address barriers.

Parents/carers should contact the school office for day-to-day attendance messages and should ask to speak to the Headteacher/Inclusion Manager, Attendance Officer or Learning Mentor where more detailed attendance support is needed. The school website includes a clear link to the Trust Attendance Policy and Rossett Acre's school-specific attendance information.

Key attendance expectations and support routes will be shared with parents/carers when children join the school and reinforced through communication with families, including new parent meetings, parent consultations, website information and targeted attendance conversations where needed.

Why Attendance Matters

Every school day counts and good school attendance and punctuality habits are best started early. Children who attend school regularly:

- build strong friendships;

- keep up with their learning;
- develop positive habits for life.

Even a small number of missed days can make it harder for a child to keep up with learning, friendships and routines.

Rossett Acre promotes good attendance by making school a welcoming, purposeful and enjoyable place to be, in line with our ethos of 'Excellence and Happiness for All'. We recognise that some children find attendance more difficult than others. At every stage, we work with children and parents/carers to understand barriers, build trusting relationships and put the right support in place.

When a child returns after absence or arrives late, they will be welcomed calmly and helped to settle back into school. Where non-attendance is a sign of wider need, we will work with families through our Nurture Team, Attendance Officer and wider support services.

Celebrating Good Attendance

Rossett Acre will promote good attendance through positive language, regular reminders and age-appropriate celebration. We will recognise strong and improving attendance in ways that are inclusive, encouraging and sensitive to pupils with illness, SEND, wellbeing needs or other barriers to attendance.

Attendance at School

All schools have a responsibility to proactively manage, monitor and improve attendance across their school community. At Rossett Acre, attendance is everyone's responsibility and is treated as a core part of safeguarding, inclusion and educational achievement. We aim to build a whole-school culture where good attendance is expected, celebrated and supported through strong relationships with pupils and families.

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This usually means attending school every day that the school is open, unless the absence is authorised or there are exceptional circumstances. Children are welcome to arrive on site from **8.40am** each morning and should be in class by **8.50am**. Please note that children should not be on site before **8.40am**. Attendance data is reviewed regularly by school leaders and reported to the Local Authority and Department for Education in line with statutory requirements.

Parents/carers must ensure that school holds up-to-date contact details and at least one emergency contact, so that we can act quickly if a child is absent, unwell or needs support during the school day.

Reporting Absence Due to Illness and Medical Appointments

Parents and carers must inform the school office by 8.45am each day if a child is unwell or will not be attending school, giving a clear reason for the absence. If we do not receive a message, the school will follow first-day calling procedures so that every pupil is safe and accounted for.

- A child who has been sick or has diarrhoea should remain away from school until they have been clear of symptoms for 48 hours.
- Medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should notify school in advance and children should return to school immediately after the appointment wherever appropriate.
- Where there are growing attendance concerns or repeated illness-related absence, the school may ask for appropriate medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, text confirmation or medical note. We will use this sensitively and will not request evidence unnecessarily.

Please contact the school office for guidance on specific illnesses and required absence periods. Parents/carers may also refer to NHS guidance: [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

It is important that parents/carers follow these procedures so that all pupils are safe and their whereabouts are accounted for.

Long-Term Absence

Occasionally, pupils may experience health, SEND, emotional or family circumstances that affect attendance

over time. School will consider each case individually and agree support and reintegration arrangements with the family and, where appropriate, external partners. Parents/carers should contact the Headteacher/Inclusion Manager or Attendance Officer if their child may need an individual attendance or reintegration plan.

Absence Due to Emotionally Based School Avoidance

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) describes situations where a child's worries, anxiety or emotional needs make attending school difficult. Rossett Acre will respond using a supportive, graduated approach that considers the pupil's voice, family views, SEND needs, wellbeing, safeguarding information and any professional advice. Where reduced or adapted arrangements are considered, they will be time-limited, reviewed regularly and used only as part of a plan to increase attendance wherever possible.

- a. **Early intervention:** when there is a pattern of change in a child's attendance, we contact and work with the child and family to understand what is happening and record agreed actions on CPOMS.
- b. **Predictable routines:** we create consistent routines so the child knows what to expect, using tools such as an individual timetable or social story where helpful.
- c. **Welcoming returns:** we make transitions back into school calm and positive after any absence.
- d. **Readiness for learning:** we support children to share worries through talking, journaling or physical activity, while helping them return to learning when ready.
- e. **Family partnership:** we work with parents/carers to share strategies, provide reassurance and review support.
- f. **Regular resets:** we support resilience and self-regulation through strategies such as mindfulness, breathing breaks or short movement breaks.
- g. **Signals and check-ins:** where helpful, we agree a card or signal so an adult can check in or offer a reset when things feel overwhelming.
- h. **Unstructured times:** we provide support during lunch and break times, including Calm Club or peer support where needed.
- i. **Morning plans:** we may create a Monday morning plan or return-to-school routine with the child and family after weekends or holidays.

Registration and Lateness Procedures

School doors open at **8.40am** so children have time to settle and be in class by **8.50am**.

By law, schools must keep an attendance register at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session. Rossett Acre uses the statutory DfE attendance codes and will record whether children are present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, late before the register closes, late after the register closes, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

- The school day officially starts at **8.50am**. Children should be in class and ready to learn by this time.
- Class registers are completed by **9.00am**. Children arriving after 9am but before the register closes will be marked as late.
- The morning register closes at **9.30am**. Children arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that morning session unless there is an authorised reason.
- Any child arriving after classroom doors have closed must enter through the main entrance and be signed in by an adult at the school office.
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Punctuality matters because it helps children feel settled, prepared and ready for the day's learning.

Recording and Use of Absence Data

- When a child does not attend school for one or more sessions, this will be recorded as an absence using the relevant statutory attendance code. Unless the school has already been informed by a parent/carer, the school office will make first-day contact from 9.30am to confirm the child's whereabouts and reason for absence.
- If absence continues, school will maintain regular contact with parents/carers so that the child remains safe, support is reviewed and any barriers are understood.
- Attendance data is reviewed at least weekly by the Attendance Officer, Headteacher/Inclusion Manager and senior leaders. We monitor whole-school patterns, individual children, vulnerable

groups, children with SEND, disadvantaged children and children at risk of becoming persistently or severely absent.

- Leaders will use available Trust and school systems, including Arbor and the Trust Attendance Dashboard where available, to analyse attendance by pupil group, year group, trend, day of week and emerging patterns.
- Registers are taken electronically, statutory returns are made as required and regular checks are carried out to ensure attendance codes are used accurately and consistently.
- Attendance information is benchmarked against school, local, Trust and national data where available, and is used to evaluate the impact of attendance strategies.
- Persistent absence is attendance below 90% because the child has missed 10% or more of possible sessions. Severe absence is attendance below 50%. Rossett Acre will act early, using supportive conversations and targeted plans before absence reaches these points wherever possible.
- Attendance concerns, contact with parents/carers, agreed actions and safeguarding considerations are recorded on Arbor and/or CPOMS as appropriate, so that actions are clear and follow-up is consistent.
- Governors will receive regular attendance information, including analysis by relevant pupil groups, so they can understand the work leaders are doing to improve attendance and hold the school to account.

Following Up Absences from School

The school will follow up any absence to confirm the reason, ensure safeguarding actions are taken, identify whether the absence can be authorised and decide what support may be needed. Rossett Acre follows a support-first approach: we will work with children and families to understand barriers, agree actions and involve wider services where this is needed. Where attendance falls towards severe absence, or where there are wider welfare concerns, leaders will consider whether Early Help, children's social care or other safeguarding action is required. Where support is not engaged with, is not effective, or is not appropriate, the school may work with the Local Authority to consider formal attendance procedures.

- unexplained absence or failure to report absence by 8.45am;
- repeated illness-related absence, emerging patterns of absence or attendance moving towards persistent absence;
- repeated lateness, including lateness after the register has closed;
- unauthorised leave of absence during term time;
- absence linked to SEND, medical needs, emotional wellbeing, safeguarding or wider family circumstances requiring a coordinated support plan.

The stages below explain how Rossett Acre will respond to attendance concerns. The aim at every stage is to secure improvement through early help, clear communication, appropriate support and consistent follow-up. Formal legal intervention is considered only when support has not led to improvement, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate due to the nature of the absence.

All decisions will be made in line with the RKLT Attendance Policy, Local Authority procedures and current DfE statutory guidance.

Stage 1 begins with early identification, supportive contact with parents/carers and practical actions to prevent attendance concerns from becoming more serious.

Stage 1: Early Identification and Support		
Cause for concern	Rossett Acre response	Records / follow-up
Attendance below 96%, downward trend or noticeable pattern of absence.	Class teacher and Attendance Officer monitor patterns and make early, supportive contact with parents/carers. The conversation explores barriers and reinforces the importance of attendance.	Arbor notes updated. CPOMS used where there are safeguarding, wellbeing or vulnerability concerns.
Attendance at or below 95%, or repeated illness-related absence.	Attendance Officer/Learning Mentor contacts parents/carers and offers support. School may request appropriate medical evidence where illness absence is frequent or a pattern is emerging.	Actions reviewed after two school weeks or sooner if absence continues.
Attendance at or below 90% or pupil is at risk of persistent absence.	Headteacher/Inclusion Manager and Attendance Officer review the pupil's needs and agree a targeted attendance support plan with the family. This may include nurture support, adjusted morning routines, Early Help, SEND review or external agency involvement.	Plan recorded, dated and reviewed regularly. Progress is checked against attendance data and family engagement.
Repeated lateness before or after the register closes.	Parents/carers are contacted to understand barriers to punctuality. School may agree practical support such as routine planning, reminders, meet-and-greet or a short-term monitoring plan.	Lateness is monitored over a two-week period. Continued concern escalates to a senior leader meeting.
Attendance affected by EBSA, SEND, medical needs or safeguarding concerns.	School uses a graduated, child-centred approach. Pupil voice, family views and professional advice are considered. Support may include an individual plan, trusted adult, nurture provision, transition plan, reasonable adjustments or referral to wider services.	Plan reviewed frequently. Any part-time or adapted timetable must be exceptional, time-limited, agreed with parents/carers and used only as part of a clear plan to support the pupil back towards full-time attendance wherever this is appropriate for their needs.

If attendance does not improve after Stage 1 support, the school will move to more formal monitoring while continuing to work with the family to identify barriers and agree support.

Stage 2: Formal Attendance Support and Monitoring	
When Stage 2 may be used	Actions by school
Stage 2 may be used where Stage 1 support has not led to sustained improvement, attendance remains a concern, unauthorised absence continues, or parents/carers have not engaged with the support offered.	The Headteacher/Inclusion Manager or Attendance Officer will invite parents/carers to a formal attendance meeting. The meeting will review barriers, actions already taken, attendance data, safeguarding information and the support needed. An attendance support plan or attendance contract may be agreed with clear targets, responsibilities and review dates.
Where unauthorised absence is approaching or meets the national threshold for a penalty notice.	School will consider whether the national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions within a rolling 10-school-week period has been met. The school will work with the Local Authority and follow RKLTL/local procedures before any penalty

	notice request or legal route is considered.
<u>Stage 3: Local Authority Involvement and Legal Intervention</u>	
When Stage 3 may be considered	Actions by school and Local Authority
Stage 3 may be considered where support has been offered but has not improved attendance, where families have not engaged with support, or where unauthorised absence continues and formal action may be appropriate.	The school will consult the Local Authority Attendance and Enforcement Officer in line with local procedures. Evidence of support, communication, attendance data, safeguarding consideration and parent/carer engagement will be shared as appropriate.
If legal intervention is required.	Legal intervention may include a penalty notice, notice to improve, formal caution interview, education supervision order or prosecution, depending on the circumstances and Local Authority decision-making. Legal routes are a last resort and do not replace the school's duty to continue offering appropriate support.

A notice to improve is a formal written warning that gives parents/carers a final opportunity to improve attendance before a penalty notice or other legal action is considered. It will explain the concern, the improvement needed and the timescale for review.

Working Together

Good attendance is a partnership between school, home, the Trust, the Local Authority and wider services. Rossett Acre will work to understand the reasons for absence and will offer practical, proportionate support that helps children feel safe, connected and successful in school. Where barriers sit beyond the school gates, we may work with Early Help, RKLTL Cluster Services, Cluster Attendance support work, health professionals, SEND services or other agencies so that families receive joined-up support.

How Rossett Acre Supports Parents with Attendance Concerns

We know that attendance concerns can sometimes feel difficult or worrying for families. At Rossett Acre, our first step is always to listen, understand what is getting in the way of regular attendance and work together to agree support that feels realistic and helpful. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact school early if they notice changes in their child's attendance, punctuality, confidence, sleep, friendships, emotional wellbeing or morning routines.

Support may include a wellbeing meeting with the Headteacher/Inclusion Manager, Attendance Officer, Learning Mentor or a member of the Nurture Team. These meetings provide a calm, supportive space to talk through concerns, identify barriers and agree a simple plan. This may include morning routines, meet-and-greet support, trusted adult check-ins, nurture provision, short-term targets, signposting to wider services, referral to Cluster Attendance support work or regular review meetings.

Where children need additional help to feel connected to school, they may be invited to join belonging groups run by our Nurture Team. These groups are designed to strengthen relationships, confidence, emotional regulation and a sense of safety in school. They may focus on friendship, transitions, resilience, self-esteem, calm routines, readiness for learning or reconnecting after absence.

Our One Life approach supports this work by helping children and families think about healthy routines, positive relationships, emotional wellbeing, belonging and readiness for learning. Through One Life, children learn how sleep, movement, nutrition, connection, emotional regulation and purposeful routines can support attendance and engagement in school.

Where attendance concerns are more persistent, or where a family would benefit from additional advice and support, Rossett Acre may make a referral to Cluster Attendance support work. This provides an additional layer of partnership support to help families understand attendance patterns, identify barriers, agree practical next steps and access wider help where needed. Referrals will be discussed with parents/carers so that support is clear, joined up and focused on helping the child

attend school regularly and successfully.

- Parents/carers can ask for an informal conversation before attendance becomes a significant concern.
- School may offer a wellbeing meeting to explore worries, barriers and practical next steps.
- Children and families may be supported through nurture provision, belonging groups, trusted adult check-ins, Cluster Attendance support work or a personalised attendance support plan.
- Support will be reviewed regularly with parents/carers so that progress is noticed, celebrated and adapted where needed.

Leave of Absence from School during Term Time

Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Headteachers are not expected to authorise holidays during term time and cannot authorise absence simply because a family has strong attendance overall, the holiday is cheaper, or the experience is considered educational. Decisions are made by the Headteacher in line with the RKLTA Attendance Policy, Local Authority procedures and current DfE statutory guidance.

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as a right.

Applications must be made before the proposed absence wherever possible, using the school's leave of absence request process. Each request will be considered individually and families are welcome to speak to the school early if they believe exceptional circumstances apply. The final decision rests with the Headteacher.

Please note that access to a lower-cost holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Where a child is taken out of school during term time without authorisation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration under the national framework for penalty notices. Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority and are not at the discretion of the Headteacher once the referral has been made.

From August 2024, the national penalty notice amount is £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, it is charged at £160. A parent cannot receive more than two penalty notices for the same child within any three-year rolling period; after this, other legal action, including prosecution, may be considered.

Taking a child on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt their educational progress.

Absences for Part of the Day

From time to time, children may become unwell during the school day. School will contact parents/carers and emergency contacts if a child needs to go home. Parents and carers must ensure school has up-to-date contact details so that we can act quickly and keep children safe.

Parents should not send children to school if they are too unwell to attend or may pose an infection risk to others. Where parents are unsure, they should contact the school office and refer to NHS guidance on whether a child is too ill for school.