



Policy Name: **Attendance Policy 2023**

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*Signed Headteacher* ..... *Date of Signature:* .....

*Signed Chair of Governors* ..... *Date of Signature*.....

**We are walking in the Footsteps of Jesus with Love Trust and Forgiveness**  
 Romsey Abbey Primary School, Church Lane, Romsey. SO51 8EP 01794 512047 adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk

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## **Vision Statement**

Romsey Abbey C of E Primary School will be a distinctive community, rooted in Christian values, whose culture has limitless ambition, professionalism, engagement and caring at its heart. Staff, parents and governors will work together closely to give every child the best possible education and life chances. The school will make a positive contribution to the local community and beyond.

## **Our Mission**

At Romsey Abbey CE School we believe that a world of opportunity lies at our feet. We see our role as a school as instilling in learners the confidence to enable success and relish challenge. We help children, families and staff to learn how to demonstrate love and grow in our ability to forgive each other, to aspire to be the best we can be. We feel it is important to both rejoice in our own success and equally in the success of others. As a church school our whole school life is based around our common values of, “walking in the footsteps of Jesus with love, trust and forgiveness.”

## **Our Aims**

Build a culture and ethos of support and respect, inclusive of language, ethnicity, ability and gender.

Create a healthy, safe environment through relationships, resources and opportunities which are accessible to all.

Provide an outstanding curriculum and learning environment that inspires, achieves the highest standards, creates a spirit of adventure, reflects culture and community and builds confident and independent learners.

Strive to build systems of communication that ensure all members of the school family have opportunities to contribute ideas and knowledge that will be valued.

## Purpose of Policy

Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: [Working together to improve school attendance](#). Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school

It has been developed in consultation with school governors, teachers, local Headteacher Associations, the Local Authority and parents and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the schools commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.**

## Promoting Regular Attendance

At Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary school, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

### **The senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school is:**

Mark Harris: Headteacher  
adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our weekly updates
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements
- Celebrate and praise good or improving attendance
- Report to parents/carers termly on their child's attendance
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance

## Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or urgent dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. 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 is not exhaustive:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g., because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn

- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session
- shopping trips
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- their own or family birthdays
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher - may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority
- day trips
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

### **Absence Procedures – See also Annex A: Attendance Summary**

**Parents should contact the school office if they have any day-to-day questions or concerns about attendance. If a parent requires more specific support for a particular issues relating to attendance they should contact our Children and Families Support Worker.**

[adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk)

01794 512047

We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

#### **If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:**

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before *9.20 am*. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before *9.20 am*
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence

#### **If your child is absent, we will:**

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you however it is your responsibility to contact us
- If we are unable to contact parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made in the interests of safeguarding

- A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be “missing from education.”

### **If absence continues, we will:**

- Write to you if your child’s attendance is falls below 96% (after the first 4 weeks of the Autumn Term), or where punctuality is a concern
- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with our Child and Family Support Worker or Headteacher if absences persist
- Create a personalised action/support plan to address any barriers to attendance
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant support and sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions

### **Lateness – See also Annex B: Punctuality Summary**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

### **Our School Day and how we manage lateness:**

- The school day starts at **8.45am** when children can begin to come into school
- Registers are taken at **8.55am** and your child will receive a late mark ‘L’ if they are not in by that time
- Children arriving after **8.55am** are required to come into school via the school office. They should be accompanied by a parent/carer who must sign them into our ‘Late Book’ and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded
- At **9.25am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site - ‘U’, but this will **not** count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence
- The school will contact parents/carers regarding lateness if a pattern emerges or a threshold of 10 lates has been reached in the school year explaining that any lates other than those for exceptional reasons will be unauthorised. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Children and Families support worker or the headteacher, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good punctuality.
- Continued unauthorised lateness (a further 10 lates) could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for support, sanctions and/or legal proceedings

### **Understanding barriers to attendance**

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse,

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners where appropriate.

See Annex C for summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

**Pupils, Parents and Carers should contact our Children and Families Support Worker for more detailed support on attendance.**

[adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk)

01794 512047

### **Local Authority attendance support services**

Local Authority Attendance Specialists work strategically by offering support to schools, families, and other professionals to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Hampshire Code of Conduct), prosecution in the Magistrates Court or the application of an Education Supervision Order, designed to strengthen parental responsibilities and ensure improved attendance.

### **School Attendance and the Law**

By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Unauthorised absence may result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

**There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday.** In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year. Permission cannot be granted retrospectively.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school in accordance with the Hampshire Code of Conduct.

A Penalty Notice may be issued where there have been at least 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence for the purpose of a holiday, however, due to the importance of pupils settling into school at the commencement of the school year, Penalty Notices may also be issued if there have been at least 6 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence during the first two calendar weeks of September due to a term-time holiday.

**At Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:**

... being of unique and significant emotional, educational, or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

**We will not consider applications for leave during term time:**

- at any time in September. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class at the start of the academic year as quickly as possible.
- during assessment and test periods in the school's calendar affecting your child.
- when a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

### **Deletion from Roll**

For any pupil leaving *Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School*, other than at the end of year 6 parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupils moving from school' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for at least two key family members in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are now **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

### **Absence data**

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking as increased absence affects attainment.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

### **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day.

*All school staff and the Governing Body are committed to working with parents and pupils as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance at our school as possible.*

## Annex A: Attendance Summary at Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School

### Attendance of >96% (96% is equivalent of 1 day absence every 5 school weeks)

**School's Role:** We will... -> Take a register twice a day -> Continually promote and celebrate Good Attendance -> Closely monitor attendance of all pupils and act early on any concerns -> Take time to listen and be responsive to concerns relating to attendance -> Work extremely hard to give every child the best possible education every day -> Put the children first in all discussion, decisions and actions

**Parents' and Carers' Role:** -> Fulfil duty to ensure child/children attend school every day -> Contact school on 01794 512047 or email [adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk) if your child is too unwell to attend school and explain the reasons for absence -> Work with us to address any attendance concerns

**Children's Role:** -> Be in school every day -> Give it a go even when not feeling at your best -> Understand that you must be in school every day

### Level 1 Support and Intervention: Attendance drops below 96% (96% is equivalent to 1 day absence every 5 school weeks) \*

School will send Amber Attendance Letter 1 outlining importance of good attendance and the expectation that this will improve over coming 6 weeks

Parent invited to share any particular issues related to falling attendance with formal or informal action plan agreed with school to address the issue if appropriate

### Level 2 Support and Intervention: Attendance drops below 92% - At risk of Persistent Absence (Below 92% is equivalent to more than 2 days absence every 5 weeks)\*\*

Parents are expected to...

- Work with the school (and local authority where appropriate) to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.

School send Red Attendance Letter 2 outlining the importance of good attendance and the detrimental impact of poor attendance on children's learning and wellbeing. Parents/Carers meet with Children and Families Support Worker or Headteacher to discuss issues and create action plan to quickly address attendance concerns and ensure attendance improves quickly.

Possible Level 2 Early Help referral to single agency where appropriate including Family Support Service, School Nurse, CAMHS

Possible Level 3 Early Help Referral to Multi Agency Support Hub to seek further support around issues relating to poor attendance

At this stage any absence will be followed up with a call from school to enquire as to the reasons for absence. In these calls we will...

- 1) Ask for more detail regarding the child's absence including their symptoms and check this in relation the NHS guide to when your child should and should not attend school.
- 2) Advise, if appropriate, that the parent/Carer brings them in to school. School will monitor closely and send them home if they are clearly not well enough for school. We may suggest parents/carers give their child age-appropriate paracetamol (e.g Calpol).
- 3) Seek any appropriate evidence to support the authorisation of the absence including details of medical appointments, temperature readings
- 4) Ask parents/carers to keep us updated with the outcome of any medical appointments
- 5) Remind parents/carers of the importance of good attendance and the detrimental impact of poor attendance
- 6) Not authorise the absence if there is doubt as to the whether the absence is essential

**Level 3 Support and Intervention: Attendance drops below 90% - Persistent Absence** (90% is equivalent to 2 days absence every 4 weeks)\*\*\*

Parents are expected to...

- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including and parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

School send Red Attendance Letter 3 informing parents/carers about their child's very low attendance and outlining the importance of improving attendance as a matter of urgency. Parents/Carers meet with Children and Families Support Worker and/or Headteacher to review Level 3 Action Plan – What needs to be added or changed in the Level 3 Action Plan?

For this level of absence we would expect an Early Help Referral to be necessary

10 Sessions (equivalent of 5 days) unauthorised absence within a 100 day period will likely incur the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team

If attendance does not notably improve in the subsequent 6 weeks (>96% for those 6 weeks), a referral to the Legal Intervention Team will be made requesting support from the local authority to improve attendance.

\*In Autumn 1 (September and October), Level 1 will be reached with 6 sessions of absence (equivalent of 3 days absence or more)

\*\*In Autumn 1 (September and October), Level 2 will be reached with 10 sessions of absence (equivalent of 5 days absence or more)

\*\*\*In Autumn 1 (September and October), Level 3 will be reached with 12 sessions of absence (equivalent of 6 days absence or more)

**Amber Attendance Letter 1: Attendance has dropped below 96%**

Date

Childs Name:

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a school we are very aware of the importance of good attendance on children's learning, progress and wellbeing. We want every child to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning and the link between attendance and progress is strikingly clear.

XXX's attendance this year is currently xx%. We are well aware that there is always a context and story behind these figures and we would be keen to talk with you further if you would like us to create a plan of support with you to help improve your child's attendance. Please do contact or speak to our Children and Families Support Worker, Caroline Badminton if you would welcome this support. She can be contacted via email: [adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk) or by phone: 01794 512047.

We would expect XXX's attendance to improve over the next 6 weeks (back to above 96%).

NHS guidance on when children are too ill for school can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We are committed to working in partnership with parents to support strong attendance so that every child is able to benefit fully from the best possible education. We look forward to hearing from you if there are issues or factors that we can discuss together and make a plan going forward.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris

Attendance Champion and Headteacher

**Red Attendance Letter 2: Risk of Persistent Absence (Attendance has dropped below 92%)**

Date

Childs Name:

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a school we are very aware of the importance of good attendance on children's learning, progress and wellbeing. We want every child to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning and the link between attendance and progress is strikingly clear.

XXX's attendance this year is now currently xx% and is thus at risk of what is termed Persistent Absence (Attendance below 90%). Research shows clearly that Persistent Absence can have a hugely detrimental impact on a child's ability to make good progress and achieve well in their learning.

We are eager to work in partnership with you now to improve your XXX's attendance as quickly as possible, creating a plan of action and support together. The office will be in contact to arrange a meeting between you and Mrs Badminton and/or myself. We can be contacted via email: [adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk), by phone: 01794 512047 or catch us on the school gate in the mornings.

We would expect XXX's attendance to significantly improve over the next 6 weeks (above 96% for those 6 weeks). At this stage, any day of absence will be followed up with a call from school to further enquire as to the reasons for absence. In these calls we will...

- 1) Ask for more detail regarding the child's absence including their symptoms and check this in relation the NHS guide to when your child should and should not attend school.
- 2) Advise, if appropriate, that you bring them into school. School will monitor closely and send them home if they are clearly not well enough for school. We may suggest you you're your child age-appropriate paracetamol (e.g Calpol) if you haven't already done so.
- 3) Seek any appropriate evidence to support the authorisation of the absence including details of medical appointments, temperature readings etc
- 4) Ask you to keep us updated with the outcome of any medical appointments
- 5) Remind you of the importance of good attendance and the detrimental impact of poor attendance
- 6) Not be able to authorise the absence if there is doubt as to the whether the absence is essential

NHS guidance on when children are too ill for school can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We are committed to working in partnership with parents to support strong attendance so that every child is able to benefit fully from the best possible education.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris

Attendance Champion and Headteacher

**Red Attendance Letter 3: Persistent Absence (Attendance is below 90%)**

Date

Childs Name:

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a school we are very aware of the importance of good attendance on children's learning, progress and wellbeing. We want every child to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning and the link between attendance and progress is strikingly clear.

XXX's attendance this year is now currently xx%. Attendance below 90% is classed as Persistent Absence and something that parents and school must urgently address. Research shows clearly that Persistent Absence can have a hugely detrimental impact on a child's ability to make good progress and achieve well in their learning.

In order to work in partnership with you to improve your XXX's attendance as quickly as possible, we will be in contact to arrange a meeting to review the action plan created on xx/xx/xxxx so we can add to or change the strategies in place to bring about the necessary improvements. Please contact us via email:

[adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk) or by phone: 01794 512047 if you wish to discuss this sooner.

It is important that we make you aware that 10 Sessions (equivalent of 5 days) unauthorised absence within a 100

day period will likely incur the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team. If attendance does not notably improve in the subsequent 6 weeks (>96% for those 6 weeks), a referral to the Legal Intervention Team will be made requesting support from the local authority to improve attendance.

At this stage, any absence will continue to be followed up with a call from school to further enquire as to the reasons for absence.

NHS guidance on when children are too ill for school can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We are committed to working in partnership with parents to support strong attendance so that every child is able to benefit fully from the best possible education.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris  
Attendance Champion and Headteacher

## **Annex B: Punctuality Summary at Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School**

School Gate is open between **8:45am** and **8:55am**

The Register is taken at **8:55am**

Lessons begin promptly at **9:00am**

At **9:25am**, Registers close and any arrival after this time is recorded as an unauthorised absence unless prior agreement has been made with the school

### **Attendance of >96% (96% is equivalent of 1 day absence every 5 school weeks)**

**School's Role:** We will... -> Provide a friendly welcome at the gate with an opportunity for parents to share quick information, concerns and ask questions -> Promote and celebrate good punctuality -> Be responsive to concerns relating to punctuality

**Parents' and Carers' Role:** Ensure child/children arrive at school on time before 8:55am with everything they need for the day (coat, water bottle, Reading Diary and book, lunchbox, PE Kit etc) Contact school on 01794 512047 or email [adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk) if you are likely to be late for exceptional and unavoidable reasons. Have a good morning routine that means you arrive on time even when traffic is bad and parking is tricky.

**Children's Role:** Be ready for school on time and bring everything you need for the day

### **Level 1 Support and Intervention**

If a child arrives after the gate has closed at 8:55am, parents must sign their child in at the office in the Late Book giving the reason for why they are late. Parents will be given a copy of Punctuality Amber Letter 1 each time they sign in late. The letter outlines the importance of good punctuality, invites parents to meet with our Children and Families Support Worker, Mrs Badminton, to problem solve any issues together and clarifies what happens at Level 2 when the threshold of 10 lates in the school year is met.

Parents/Carers should speak to the school as soon as possible if there is a short term or long term issue that makes timely drop off difficult. An informal meeting with our Children and Families Support Worker, Mrs Badminton, can be arranged to identify ways school and home can work together to ensure punctuality remains good.

The school will speak to the parents/carers before the threshold of 10 lates is met if there is a pattern of concern such as multiple lates within a half term, an increase in the regularity of lates etc. Parents will be invited to share any particular issues related to punctuality with formal or informal action plan agreed with school to address the issue

### **Level 2 Support and Intervention: Threshold of 10 lates in the school year is reached**

Punctuality Red Letter 2 sent to parents/carers outlining that no further lates will be authorised and that 10 further lates will incur a Fixed Penalty Notice.

A meeting with the Children and Families Support Worker and/or Headteacher will be arranged to create an action plan to improve punctuality addressing any issues contributing to the poor punctuality.

Possible Level 2 Early Help referral to single agency will be considered where appropriate including Family Support Service, School Nurse, CAMHS

Possible Level 3 Early Help Referral to Multi Agency Support Hub will be considered to seek further support around issues relating to punctuality issues

### **Level 3 Support and Intervention: 5 lates after Punctuality Red letter 2 was sent**

Red Punctuality Letter 3 sent to parents/carers outlining that 5 more lates within the school year will incur a Fixed Penalty Notice.

A meeting with the Children and Families Support Worker and/or Headteacher will be arranged to review the punctuality action plan and consider any additions or changes to the plan.

If a Level 2 or Level 3 Early Help referral has not been made as yet this will be discussed and suggested if appropriate.

A Legal Intervention Team Referral will also be discussed before a Fixed Penalty Notice has to be issued.

If the threshold of 10 further lates after Red Punctuality Letter 2 was sent a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued unless the Legal Intervention Team are involved or there is evident engagement with school and other outside agencies to address issues.

### **Amber Punctuality Letter 1: Child is Late to School**

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a school we are very aware of the importance of good punctuality on children's learning, progress and wellbeing.

**We want every child to have the best possible opportunity to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning** and being in school on time is very important within this.

Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

**5 minutes late twice a week adds up to 6½ hours (more than a whole school day) of lost learning across the school year.**

**Poor punctuality can have a very detrimental impact on a child's day.** Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

Please speak to our Children and Families Support Worker, Mrs Badminton, if you would like to problem solve any issues relating to punctuality. Mrs Badminton can be contacted on the school gate each morning, via email: [adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk) or by phone: 01794 512047.

We are keen to work with you to ensure that the right support strategies are in place upon which to build a strong platform of good attendance and punctuality so please do speak to us.

It is important that we make you aware that if a threshold of 10 lates is reached we will contact you to arrange a meeting and outline that any further lates will be unauthorised. Again we would seek to create a shared plan that ensures that any particular difficulties and issues are addressed. If after this point a further 10 lates occur, then a Fixed Penalty Notice is likely to be incurred or a referral to Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team be made.

**We are committed to working in partnership with parents** to support strong attendance and punctuality so that every child is able to benefit fully from the best possible education. We look forward to hearing from you if there are issues or factors that we can discuss together and make a plan going forward.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris

Attendance Champion and Headteacher

**Red Punctuality Letter 2: Persistent Lateness (ten or more Lates this year)**

Date:

Child's Name:

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a school we are very aware of the importance of good punctuality on children's learning, progress and wellbeing.

**We want every child to have the best possible opportunity to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning** and being in school on time is very important within this.

Our records show that XXX has been late on 10 occasions already this year. We know that there will be a context and story around this and that circumstances are different for every family in school but we know that the impact of persistent lateness can be very detrimental. We are thus committed to working in partnership with you to address any issues contributing to the poor punctuality and ensure that the right support is in place to enable improvements to be made.

We will be in contact to arrange a meeting between you and our Children and Families Support Worker, Mrs Badminton and/or myself as soon as possible. At this meeting we will aim to better understand your circumstances and hurdles to good punctuality and create a shared plan of support and strategies to address those hurdles.

It is important that we make you aware that any further lates will now be unauthorised. A further 10 lates this school year will likely incur a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team.

Good communication and engagement are key to ensure that any further measures are not necessary and XXX benefits from being in school on time every day.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris

Attendance Champion and Headteacher

**Red Punctuality Letter 3: Ongoing Persistent Lateness**

Date:

Child's Name:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Our records show that since Red Punctuality Letter 2 was sent on xx/xx/xxxx, XXX has had five further unauthorised lates. As per our previous letter, if this reaches a threshold of ten unauthorised lates, the school will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, which is £60 per child per parent. This is something that you and we as a school our very keen to avoid.

We will be in contact to arrange a meeting as soon as possible where we can review the action plan created at our previous meeting on xx/xx/xxxx and consider what needs to be added or changed to ensure the support is effective and there are no further lates this year. We can also look again at referrals to outside agencies within the local authority to support the underlying issues.

**We are committed to working in partnership with parents** to support strong attendance and punctuality so that **every child has the best possible opportunity to grow in confidence and succeed in all areas of their learning**. Good communication and engagement can ensure that any further measures are not necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harris

Attendance Champion and Headteacher

## Annex C: DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. September 2022

### All Pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

**Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent**

<b>Parents are expected to:</b>	<b>Schools are expected to:</b>	<b>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</b>	<b>Local authorities are expected to:</b>
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that that the school is best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

**Persistently absent pupils**

<b>Parents are expected to:</b>	<b>Schools are expected to:</b>	<b>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</b>	<b>Local authorities are expected to:</b>
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including and parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p>	<p>Regularly re-view attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p>

**Severely absent pupils**

<b>Parents are expected to:</b>	<b>Schools are expected to:</b>	<b>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</b>	<b>Local authorities are expected to:</b>
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

**Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance**

<b>Parents are expected to:</b>	<b>Schools are expected to:</b>	<b>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</b>	<b>Local authorities are expected to:</b>
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special education need, educational psychologists and mental health services to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

**Support for pupils with a social worker**

<b>Parents are expected to:</b>	<b>Schools are expected to:</b>	<b>Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:</b>	<b>Local authorities are expected to:</b>
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p>

## Further Information Sources

### Links to other policies/documents

Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

Hampshire Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/penalty-notice-unauthorised-absence-school-march2020.docx>

### Links to other websites

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

### Role Holders

Attendance Champion: Mark Harris (Headteacher)

Children and Families Support Worker: Caroline Badminton

Names of all Role holders specified in this document can be found on the school website:

<http://www.romseyabbeyschool.co.uk/>