

## RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### ATTENDANCE POLICY (2016)

<b>Review Body:</b>	School Improvement meeting
<b>Leadership Group Responsibility:</b>	Assistant Headteacher
<b>Type of Policy:</b>	Statutory
<b>Review Period:</b>	Annually
<b>Reviewed:</b>	May 2016
<b>Next Review:</b>	April 2017

Regular attendance at school is vital if the student is to make satisfactory progress and is to achieve the academic grades required. Parents are required by law to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Students who miss lessons unnecessarily can cause a great deal of disruption for staff and fellow students.

Figures have shown that 90% of persistent non-attendeess fail to achieve 5 or more good grades of GCSE and around one third achieve no GCSE's at all. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable and have attended school regularly. Every day that a child misses school is a missed opportunity. For example, if a child only attends school for 90 percent of the school year, they are missing the equivalent of four weeks a year or half a year out of the five they spend in secondary education. For this reason, the school takes the non-attendance of children very seriously.

School Target – 100%

LEA Target – 96%

AAP Involvement – 92% (10 unauthorised absences)

Statutory Penalty Notice – (10 unauthorised absences)

#### PROCEDURE

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be out of school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised (DFES 0628-2003).

#### Leave of Absences during term time

RMGS are not permitted to and will not authorise leave of absence during term time except for exceptional circumstances. Government regulations remove a Headteacher's right to authorise leave of absence during term time and make direct reference to holiday. Exceptional circumstances may include such occasions as family bereavement or participation at a high level in a representative sport. The exceptional circumstances must be made clear on the Leave of Absence form which must be approved a minimum of 10 days in advance for the absence to be authorised accept when this is clearly not feasible. A Leave of Absence form is available from the school office and must be completed before any absence from school, for any reason other than illness.

#### Strategies

A variety of strategies will be employed to counteract large numbers of absences such as informing the Attendance Advisory Practitioner, attending on a Saturday or on Staff Development Days, to make up the work.

Good attendance will be recognised and will be taken into account in the school reward system.

## Cause for Concern

Whilst the school hopes that all children will achieve 100% attendance the LEA target is 96%. Attendance at less than this level is a cause for concern and will be monitored by the designated school member of staff with responsibility for attendance.

Frequent absence, leading to attendance levels below 92% that is 'authorised' will be investigated by the appropriate school designated member of staff, with the Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher and the Attendance Advisory Practitioner informed as necessary and insistence upon medical evidence before absence will be authorised.

Attendance at less than 92% could lead to involvement from the local authority and may lead to the issuing of a fixed penalty notice by the AAP after referral from the school. The school will not refer if it is satisfied that the absence is unavoidable and that every effort is made by parents to ensure maximum attendance.

## Monitoring

### Page 2 of 3

There are 39 school weeks, containing 380 half-day sessions. Thus students should attend school for at least 370 sessions (95%) as a minimum expectation.

Attendance levels will be monitored continuously by Form Tutors and Heads of Year. Heads of Year are required to take initial steps to reduce unacceptable levels of absence by students. Follow-up work to be undertaken by the school designated member of staff and should it be required by the eventual involvement of the Assistant Headteacher i/c Pastoral.

A weekly audit on overall % attendance will take place for the whole school originated by the school designated member of staff in liaison with the Assistant Headteacher.

Reports will be produced comparing attendance levels of groups of pupils. Comparison will be by:

Year Group  
Gender  
SEN  
Ethnicity  
Free School Meals

Absence figures will also be reported to the governors, at the Development Committee, on an annual basis. Target figures for overall school absence are also reviewed and set by the governors on an annual basis.

Action to improve attendance:

If the attendance levels fall to a level that causes concern and there is no good reason; the school designated member of staff should take the following steps, bearing in mind that each case will be different and it is important to deal with individual cases sensitively, advice from the Attendance Advisory Practitioner should be followed and notes kept.

1. Below 92% - school designated member of staff will monitor absence level and pass concerns to Heads of Year. A note on SIMS or student folder should record any contact with parent or guardian.

2. Below 90% after any mini term break the school designated member of staff will write to the parents to inform them that the situation has not improved sufficiently and to tell them that the Attendance Advisory Practitioner has been informed. They will enclose an attendance certificate.  
Inform The Assistant Headteacher, The Head of Year, The Attendance Advisory Practitioner and Careers Officer. A letter will be placed on file. Parents will be invited to an attendance clinic led by the AAP.
3. Below 80%. School designated member of staff should ensure that the above procedures have been completed. Inform the Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher providing copies of attendance certificates, notes of conversations with parents and letters sent for review. If appropriate, the Assistant Headteacher can refer the case to the AAP. Under certain circumstances the AAP may decide to issue a fixed penalty notice under the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.