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**Reddam House Berkshire**

**Attendance Policy**

### Reddam House Berkshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, students and visitors to share this commitment.

### All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Reddam House Berkshire.

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# Introduction

As a community we believe that we should ensure good attendance, discourage lateness, ensure that a full record is kept of all absences and for the school to be aware of all persons present on the school site at any point in time. This will also ensure that registers are correctly kept and available for inspection by any appropriate body at any given time.

This policy covers students in the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools. **For details on the Early Learning School please see the ELS Unaccountably Absent and ELS Uncollected Child Policy, available separately.**

# Registration

The School is legally required to register students. It is therefore essential that all students are registered every lesson on ISAMS.

School starts at 8.30am, with students in the Junior School having a staggered drop-off up to 9am. All students should go straight to their tutor/form rooms for registration, morning activities (Juniors) and in preparation for the start of lessons at 08.50am (9am for Reception – Year 3). At this time, they should collect items for the day and make sure that they are aware of any changes / arrangements to the day’s activities (In Senior and Middle they must check their e-mails daily). Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues.

In the Junior School it is also an important time for teachers to hear readers, give notices and share the visual timetable for the day.

# Signing Out

The **Signing In and Out Book at** Main Reception asks for a destination and reason for leaving. Students (or in the case of Juniors, their parents) need to specify their reason for leaving e.g. illness, appointment, study leave etc. If a student is leaving due to illness, they must be seen by the medical centre first, via reception or the Junior Admin office.

Up to and including Year 11, a parent must sign a student out of school. Students in the Sixth Form may do sign out with written parental permission.

Students, or students’ parents must sign back in on their return.

# Absence

## First day of absence notification

If a student is unable to attend school through illness parents/guardians should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence **before 8.40am**. Alternatively they can email reception at [reception@reddamhouse.org.uk](mailto:reception@reddamhouse.org.uk) , Junior Admin at [junioradmin@reddamhouse.org.uk](mailto:junioradmin@reddamhouse.org.uk) or call in in person from 8am. If no contact is made then reception/Junior Admin will attempt to contact parents via SMS, phone call and/or email. (See Appendix A) If no contact is made with the school by 8am the following morning then the school may be concerned enough to contact the police and/or social services.

## Consecutive day’s absence

If a student is absent for more than one day parents must contact the school in the same way, on a daily basis, so that we may be sure of the child’s whereabouts.

## Medical/Dental Appointments

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where children need to attend such appointments during the school day students MUST be signed out at reception. Please indicate in advance whether s/he will be returning and ensure that they sign back in at reception.

## Emergency Occasions

There are some occasions e.g. bereavements, family problems, etc. where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school; we will be sympathetic to such needs.

## Types of Absence

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

### Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the student to be away or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory explanation for absence.

Parents may not authorise absence; only schools can do this. Should school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about an absence is not genuine; the absence should be treated as unauthorised. Students are not allowed, without permission from the Head, to leave early or to be absent for any cause other than illness or emergency.

Parents/carers are required to telephone or email Reception or Junior Admin prior to 08.40am on the first morning of a student's absence as above. If no message is received, we will assume that your child is absent without your permission. We will then make every effort to contact you.  In the case of an extended period of absence through illness, parents/carers are asked to update the school of the student's progress.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

* Illness, medical or dental appointments;
* Days of religious observance;
* Exclusion;
* Traveller child travelling;
* Family bereavement;
* Involvement in a public performance;
* Family holidays (when the school has given approval in advance and for no more than 10 days.);
* Off-site examination;
* Special occasions - the nature of such special occasions will be determined by the school on an individual basis;
* Lateness (when the student arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation).

Excessive amounts of authorised absence may often be as damaging to continuity of learning as unauthorised absence. The School will therefore only authorise absence sparingly and only after careful consideration, particularly where students have a history of irregular attendance.

**The following codes are to be used for authorised absences on the register:**

**SCK: Illness**

Schools can request medical evidence from parents / carers if they feel the authenticity of an illness is in doubt

**MED: Medical or dental appointments**

Parents / Carers are encouraged to arrange appointments out of school hours but the school will authorise if confirmation of the appointment is provided.

**AUT: Other circumstances**

This code will be used for any authorised non-medical reasons for a child’s absence from school, i.e. family funeral.

**UNE: Interview**

This code will be used when it has been agreed that the student can miss school to attend an interview or entrance exam.

**SCH: Approved sporting activity**

This code will be used in times of approved sporting activities in school times, i.e. training sessions, trials and sporting events.

**EXC: Educational visits and trips**

This code will be used in times of approved educational visits or events in school times, i.e. revision days, subject trips.

**STU: Study leave (Years 11 and 13 only)**

This code will be used during mock and external examinations for students that have been given parental permission to work from home.

**EXL: Exclusion**

This code will be used when a student has been suspended.

### Approved Educational Activity

Students who are registered off-site or dual registered, or who are engaged in supervised educational activities away from school premises, need not be marked as authorised absence, provided that such activities are:

* of an educational nature;
* approved by the school;
* supervised.

These students may be recorded as on an approved educational activity. This means that for statistical purposes, for particular activities, such as field trips, educational visits and approved sporting activities they can be counted as 'present'. The nature of the activity must, however, be recorded in the class register by use of the appropriate code. This is important to ensure that an accurate record of those students physically present on site at any given time is instantly available.

### Leave of Absence

When leave of absence is required for some special reason, an application in writing must be received by the Head at least one week in advance of the day for which absence is requested. These forms can be found on the ISAMS portal or by emailing Reception or Junior Admin. This request and any subsequent correspondence about this will be kept in the student’s file, stored securely in the school office and on ISAMS.  (See Appendix E). Requests will only be granted if it is felt that the child’s education is unlikely to suffer. **It is not our policy to authorise holidays in term time.**

### Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the student's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:

* No explanation is offered by the parent/carer;
* The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (shopping, minding the house);
* Family holidays (which are taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed with the school);
* Lateness when the student arrives after 9.00am and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation;
* Signing out without parental permission;
* Special occasions (when the school does not agree that these should be given).

**The code UKN is to be used for** **unauthorised absences on the register:**

* **Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period**. If the school does not authorise a leave of absence and the parents still take the child on holiday, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised.
* **The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval**. If the parents did not apply for the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
* **Reason for absence not yet provided**. The School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a student’s absence.
* **Absent from school without authorisation.** If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence it will be recorded as unauthorised.

## Responding to Unauthorised Absence

The school will make all efforts to contact parents of an unauthorised absentee. If this is not possible, and parents cannot be contacted, Wokingham Children’s’ Services or the police may be contacted. For younger children (i.e. those under the age of 12) if no contact is received from the parents during the first day of absence then the police will be notified in order to check that all is well with the family.

If a student is absent without parental permission, the Missing Child Policy will be followed. (Please see Child protection/safeguarding policy September 2021)

If a parent removes a child without permission, the Head of School will arrange a meeting with parents to investigate the matter further. Advice may be taken from Social Services, or the matter referred, if it is of concern to the School.

## Persistent Absence

The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the student regularly attends the school at which he/she is registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that his/her child attends that school regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence. (Parents who are convicted of this offence may be fined up to £2,500 and/or sentenced to up to three months in prison. Alternatively, parents may be subject to a fixed penalty notice.) When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. (See the Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006.) Should the absence be authorised by the school, the parent cannot be convicted of any offence, although the implications for a child with regard to poor attendance may be the subject of further discussion in the context of the promotion of wellbeing..

### Responding to Persistent Absence

Where the school has concerns about excessive absence patterns this will have to be discussed with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support. A reminder letter will be sent to parents following 3 consecutive days or 5 days absence in any one half term. (See Appendix B)

Persistent absence is absence of 20% or more. An individual student is considered to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if his/her attendance is less than 80%, regardless of whether or not the absence has been authorised. In such cases parents will be asked to attend an **attendance review meeting** with the Head of School.  (See Appendix C) If the justifications for absence are inadequate, or the level of absence is likely to have a significant impact on the child’s education, the school will refer the matter to Social Services. Percentage absences will be calculated each half term and any children reaching the 80% list will be monitored on a fortnightly basis to ensure that the attendance improves.

## Lateness

Please try to ensure that your child arrives at school so that they are present each day for registration. Time spent in registration as a form group and with their teacher is important. Notices are given, reading occurs (in Juniors) and events like Year Group/House Assemblies are also timetabled then. Being late for the start of lesson 1 (at 8:50am/9am) will impact on your child’s learning.

Students who arrive after 8:50am/9am will be recorded as ‘late for school’ and must be signed into the ‘Signing In and Out Book’ by a parent or carer (Junior School) or must sign in themselves (Middle/Senior School), specifying a reason for lateness. This is held at the Main Reception and will be recorded on ISAMS student register.

As per the Code the Conduct, students across all school will receive a demerit for persistent lateness.

Where a genuine reason for lateness exists, this will be an authorised absence but where explanations are inadequate, or the lateness becomes frequent, the Head of School will need to discuss this with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support.

### Responding to Persistent Lateness

Repeated lateness at the beginning of a school session can amount to a failure to attend regularly for the purpose of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Persistent lateness is lateness of 20% or more. Tutors will monitor lateness and will contact parents if it occurs for 3 consecutive days or any 5 days within a half term. If a student’s punctuality falls below 80% parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with the Head of School.  (See Appendix D)

## Procedure to be Followed by Staff when a Student is not Collected on Time

If a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a day, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an adult who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

The following procedure will be adopted: -

* If a student is not collected within 30 minutes of the agreed collection time (before 6pm) and 15 minutes after 6pm, the School will call the contact numbers for the parent. During this time, the student will be safely looked after by the School.
* After 30 minutes, the Head of School and Principal will be informed.
* If there is no response from the parent's contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a three-hour period, (or two-hour period after 6pm) the Head of School or Principal will contact the Social Care Duty Officer. The School may be able to offer emergency accommodation for the student, but if it is more appropriate Social Care will make emergency arrangements. Social Care will arrange for a visit to be made to the student's house and will check with the Police.
* The School will make a full written report of the incident. The Chairman of the School Governing Body will be informed.

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# Appendix A: Correspondence for first day absence

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a student is absent and parents are uncontactable (by SMS or phone call).

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| Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:  Your son/daughter/ward is currently absent from school. Please contact the school as soon as possible to verify the reason for this absence. In line with our school policy, if we have not heard from you by 8am tomorrow, then this will be a serious matter that we may have to refer to the police or social services.  For your child’s safety it is extremely important that we are made aware of student absences. Please see below a reminder of the school’s procedure for notification of absence.  ***First day of absence notification***  *If a student is unable to attend school through illness parents/guardians should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence* ***before 8.30am****. Alternatively they can email reception at* [*reception@reddamhouse.org.uk*](mailto:reception@reddamhouse.org.uk) *or call in in person from 8am.*  *If no contact is made then reception will attempt to contact parents via SMS, phone call and/or email. (See Appendix A) If no contact is made with the school by 8am the following morning then the school may be concerned enough to contact the police and/or social services.*  Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation. |

# Appendix B: Correspondence for concerning absence

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a student has 3 consecutive days or 5 days absence in a half term.

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| Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:  Attendance is an essential component to a student’s academic success, and thus it is important for us as a school to highlight significant absences. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.  This letter is to inform you that your child has accumulated (5 absences this half term / three consecutive absences) this half term.  Government regulations state that student attendance that falls below 90% (even with authorised absence) is unsatisfactory. We do understand that this might be unavoidable, but the school is keen to encourage attendance that remains above this threshold.  Please do let us know if we can provide any further support. |

# Appendix C: Correspondence for persistent absence

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a student has below 80% attendance in a half term.

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| Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:    Attendance is an essential component to a student’s academic success. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.    This letter is to inform you that your child’s attendance is currently below 80% which according to government guidelines is an ‘unacceptable’ level.  Although your child’s absences may have been authorised, any absence means a loss of contact time with the teacher and a loss of critical instruction.  This is very difficult for a student to make up, even with parental help at home, and will need a clear plan for the student to ensure completion of missed work.    The Department for Education’s research into the link between absence and attainment concluded that as the level of overall absence increases, the likelihood of achieving key attainment outcomes at the end of a key stage decreases. Please see the link below for more detail.    <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf>   |  | | --- | | [The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf)  [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)  The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 2013/14 academic year. Research report March 2016 |   The Head of School will be in contact with you to arrange an **attendance review meeting**. We look forward to working with you to improve your child’s attendance.    Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation. |

# Appendix D: Correspondence for persistent lateness

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a student has below 80% punctuality in a half term.

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| Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:  Punctuality is an essential component to a student’s academic success. Often, the number of days that students are late accumulate without parents realising.  This letter is to inform you that your child’s punctuality is currently below 80% which according to government guidelines is an ‘unacceptable’ level.  When students arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled. Furthermore, when one student arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and the teacher, thus everyone’s education is compromised.  The Head of School will be in contact with you to arrange an **attendance review meeting**. We look forward to working with you to improve your child’s attendance.    Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation. |

# Appendix E: Leave of Absence form

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| --- |
| Macintosh HD:Users:j.day:Desktop:Screen Shot 2016-06-20 at 19.40.30.png  **Student Leave of Absence Form**  ***This form should be completed in advance of the proposed period of absence by the parent/ guardian with whom the child normally resides. In line with Government and local Authority guidance, all leave requests will be dealt with at the discretion of the Head of School. The period of attendance will also be taken into account.***  *I wish to apply for leave of absence from school for my child:*  **Name of child/ren ………………………………………………………………………………………………....**  **Year Group …………….................................................................................................**  **First day of leave requested…………………………………………. Last day……………………….....**  **Number of school days involved……………………………………………………………………………..**  **Exceptional circumstances leading to request: THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED**  **Signed…………………………………………………. (Parent/ Guardian) Date……………………………………**  **The above leave is authorised/ not authorised (delete as applicable), in accordance with the school’s procedures.**  **Signed………………………………………………….. (Head of School) Date…………………………………….** |

# Appendix F: Sponsored Students (Child Student/Student/Tier 4)

Sponsored students (Child Student/Student/Tier 4) must immediately be reported to UKVI via the Sponsorship Management System (SMS) if they miss 10 consecutive expected contact points.

Reddam House considers a contact point to be 1 school day (Monday-Friday during term time). Tier 4 students can be identified on iSAMS via the Student Manager module, Saved (tab), Registrar (user), Sponsored students (saved search).

## Unauthorised student absence of 8 days

Principal to call parents to advise visa will be revoked if they do not contact the school regarding the unauthorised absence.

Principal will inform the Level 1 user (Vickie Carpenter) to prepare to report to UKVI.

## Unauthorised student absence of 10 days

Principal to call parents to advise sponsorship is being withdrawn.

Principal will inform the Level 1 user (Vickie Carpenter) for immediate action to report withdrawal of sponsorship via the SMS.