



REDDAM
— HOUSE —

BERKSHIRE

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 and Aims

As a community it is vital that we ensure good attendance, discourage lateness and keep a full record of all absences and for the school to be aware of all persons present on the school site at any point in time. We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- o Promoting good attendance
- o Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- o Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- o Acting early to address patterns of absence
- o Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Registers must be correctly kept and available for inspection by any appropriate body at any given time. Registers are taken on iSAMS in Junior, Middle and Senior School. The school will have at least two or more contact details for parents, carers or guardians in order that we be able to contact easily at times of emergency, or for other reasons.

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 twice per day. It is therefore essential that all students are registered Period 1 and Period 5. Best practice is to register students at the beginning of 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 or relevant assembly space for registration, morning activities (Juniors) and in preparation for the start of lessons at 08.50am (9am for Reception – Year 2). Period 1 starts at 08:50 and registration is a statutory requirement for Period 1. Period 5 starts at 14:00 and registration is a statutory requirement for Period 5.

Signing Out

Junior, Middle and Senior School Students sign out at Main Reception. A member of the Junior School staff team will accompany any departing Junior student to Main Reception. A reason needs to be entered on iSAMS for the student leaving eg. illness, appointment, study leave etc. The reason will have been notified by parents or Guardians in advance via an absence leave request on iSAMS or via e-mail or telephone call to Main Reception/Junior Admin. 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 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 parents/guardians should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence **before 8.40am**. Alternatively they can email Main Reception at reception@reddamhouse.org.uk , Junior Admin at junioradmin@reddamhouse.org.uk or telephone 0118 974 8300 or call-in in person from 8am. The form tutor and year coordinator should be copied in too. If no contact is made then Reception/Junior Admin will attempt to contact parents via iSAMS, phone call and/or email. If no contact is made with the school by 9am 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 these appointments **MUST** be requested via a Leave of Absence form (ISAMS) in advance. This will then be approved or not by the student's head of school. Students **MUST** be signed out at Main Reception when they leave school. Parents and guardians should indicate in advance whether s/he will be returning and ensure that they sign back in at Main Reception. Reception/Junior admin should be contacted for any emergency appointments.

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. Requests for absence **MUST** be made through a leave of absence request on ISAMS and be approved by the student's head of school. In emergencies where there is no time for this, parents **MUST** notify Main Reception or Junior Admin via telephone or email.

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 a 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 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.

With the exception of illness, which cannot be known in advance, parents/carers are required to complete a leave of absence request on ISAMS (and have it approved by the student's head of school) or, in the case of illness, telephone or email Reception or Junior Admin prior to 08.40am on the first morning of a student's absence as above. Your child's form tutor and year coordinator should also be copied in. If no message is received, we will assume that your child is absent without 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;
- 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).
- For borders only: a maximum of 1 travelling day at the end of term in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances only.

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. If a student's attendance drops below 90% a stage 1 attendance letter will be sent to parents from the Year co-ordinator (via reception/junior admin). If absence does not improve from there, further contact will be made via the Year co-ordinator and a plan put into place, as per Wokingham Education Welfare team guidance.

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

I: Illness

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

M: 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.

C: Other circumstances

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

J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

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

Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional Circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because the school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because the pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity)

P 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.

V: 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.

S: 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.

E: Exclusion

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

G: Unauthorised holiday taken during term time.**O: All other unauthorised absences.****K: Med Centre**

This code is used when a student is authorised absent as they are in our medical centre.

Q: Music/LAMDA Lesson

This code is used when a student is at a Music or LAMDA lesson onsite.

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 on ISAMS, through the Parent Portal, must be received by the Head of School at least 48 hours (preferably a week) in advance of the day for which absence is requested. Parents/Guardians should email Reception or Junior Admin if they have difficulty with ISAMS. 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.** These will be marked as unauthorized.

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 – special circumstances only (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).
- Frequent illness with no medical evidence (e.g. one day weekly consistently)
- Prolonged illness with no medical evidence

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

- **Family holiday (special circumstances only) 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.

The code O is to be used for all other unauthorised absences on the register:

- Signing in late after the register has closed for an absence from school that has not been authorised

Absences for a child with Safeguarding Concerns

We pay special attention and have an active safeguarding response to any absences relating to a child who we have safeguarding concerns about. This includes contacting social workers and other agencies as necessary.

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 2023.)

If a parent removes a child without permission, the Year co-ordinator may 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 Education Welfare Officer from Wokingham borough council.

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. The form tutor will contact parents following 3 consecutive days or 5 days absence in any one half term to ensure everything is ok and gain more understanding of the problem.

Persistent absence is absence of 10% or more. An individual student is considered to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if his/her attendance is less than 90%, regardless of whether or not the absence has been authorised. In such cases, the following actions will be taken.

1 – attendance is monitored weekly and formal contact points are every half term. At the end of the half term those students whose attendance falls below 90% will receive a letter from the year co-ordinator sent via reception.

2 – by the end of the next half term if there is no improvement a second letter will be sent home by the Year co-ordinator

3- following this no absences will be authorized without medical evidence. If there is no further improvement, parents will be invited to meet with the year co-ordinator to discuss supporting home with their child's attendance

4 – no further improvement will result in an attendance action plan being produced, which is reviewed every 3 weeks for a period of 9 weeks- no further improvement will lead to involvement with the Education Welfare officer from Wokingham Borough Council.

A child who has missed more than 20 consecutive days of unauthorised absence would be classed as CME and the local authority should be informed (EWO). The EWS like to be informed at 10 days in order to be able to put early support in place to help prevent further absence.

Sponsored Students

Sponsored students 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).

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 (Registrar) 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 (Registrar) for immediate action to report withdrawal of sponsorship via the SMS.

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 in by a parent or carer at Main Reception (Junior School) or must sign in themselves at Main Reception (Middle/Senior School), specifying a reason for lateness. This is recorded on iSAMS student register.

As per the Code the Conduct, students across all the Middle and Senior 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 Year co-ordinator 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 10% 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 90% parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with the Year co-ordinator.

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.