



ATTEND – ENGAGE - PROGRESS

‘Reality Strikes Academy provides alternative education that combines academic learning with football coaching to help young people reengage with education, through a trauma informed, nurturing environment. The vision is to foster holistic personal and emotional growth to create positive pathways into the future for young people.’

REALITY STRIKES ACADEMY

Attendance and Admissions Policy

2025/26

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Important Contacts

Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Sam Woodhall	Sam.woodhall@relaitystrikes.co.uk 07359079827
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Reuben Bowen	Reuben.bowen@realitystrikes.co.uk 07446802436
Chair of Governors	Richard Woods	Richard.woods@truelearning.org.uk 07969394852
Governor for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Jade Gilchrist	Jade.gilchrist@compass-schools.org 07971371200

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out Reality Strikes Academy's approach to the admission and attendance of pupils placed within our alternative provision (AP) setting.

It ensures that placements are made fairly, safely, and in the best interests of each young person, while maintaining high expectations for attendance, engagement, and wellbeing.

1.2 Ethos and Commitment to Inclusion

Reality Strikes Academy is a trauma-informed, nurture-based alternative provision offering education and therapeutic support to pupils aged 6–16 who have experienced challenges within mainstream or specialist education.

We believe that every child deserves a place where they feel safe, understood, and valued, and that consistent engagement with education is central to achieving stability, growth, and success.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils placed at Reality Strikes Academy, including full-time and part-time placements.
 - All staff involved in admissions, attendance monitoring, and pupil welfare.
 - Referring local authorities, schools, and external agencies.
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2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- *Education Act 1996*
 - *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006* (as amended)
 - *School Attendance (England) Regulations 2013*
 - *Children Missing Education – DfE Guidance (2016)*
 - *Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (DfE, 2013)*
 - *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
 - *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*
 - *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK GDPR*
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3. Aims and Objectives

Reality Strikes Academy aims to:

- Provide a transparent and needs-led admissions process that ensures placements are appropriate, safe, and purposeful.
 - Promote regular attendance and engagement as a key part of pupil progress, safeguarding, and reintegration.
 - Identify and address barriers to attendance early through trauma-informed and therapeutic strategies.
 - Maintain accurate records of attendance, safeguarding, and referrals in line with statutory requirements.
 - Build strong partnerships with parents, carers, and referring professionals to support every pupil's success.
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4. Admissions Principles

4.1 Admissions Statement

Reality Strikes Academy accepts referrals for pupils who are unable to thrive in a mainstream environment and require a smaller, nurturing, and structured setting.

We work closely with local authorities, schools, and families to ensure that placements are appropriate and that the provision can effectively meet each pupil's needs.

4.2 Admissions Criteria

A pupil may be considered for placement where:

- The AP can safely and effectively meet their learning, behavioural, and emotional needs.
- The placement supports the pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or identified SEN.
- There is agreement from the referring body and parents/carers.
- The pupil's needs do not pose a level of risk that would compromise safety within the AP environment.

4.3 Referral and Placement Process

Referrals may be made by:

- Local authorities;
- Mainstream or special schools;
- Parents/carers (with local authority agreement);
- Social care or other agencies.

The process includes:

1. Referral Form and Supporting Documentation (EHCP, risk assessment, reports).
2. Initial Review Meeting with the pupil, family, and referring agency.
3. On-site visit (where appropriate).
4. Decision and confirmation of placement by the Proprietor/Admissions Panel.
5. Induction and transition plan tailored to individual needs.

4.4 Flexible Placements

Reality Strikes Academy offers both short-term and longer-term placements, including:

- Part-time or blended timetables.
- Transition placements preparing pupils for reintegration.
- Ongoing therapeutic or vocational support programmes.

4.5 Declining or Ending a Placement

A placement may be declined or ended if:

- The AP cannot safely meet the child's needs.
- The pupil poses a serious and sustained risk to themselves or others.
- There is a breakdown in placement agreement despite extensive intervention.

Decisions are made transparently and collaboratively, following multi-agency discussion.

5. Attendance Principles

5.1 Purpose

Consistent attendance is essential for pupil safety, progress, and wellbeing. Attendance is monitored daily and treated as a key safeguarding indicator.

5.2 Expectations

- Pupils are expected to attend according to their agreed timetable.
- Parents/carers must notify the AP of any absence by 9:00 a.m. each day.
- All unexplained absences are followed up with a same-day phone call and, if necessary, a home welfare check.

5.3 Authorised Absences

These include:

- Illness or medical appointments.
- Religious observance.
- Family emergencies or pre-approved exceptional circumstances.

5.4 Unauthorised Absences

These include:

- Absence without explanation.
- Refusal to attend without valid reason.
- Term-time holidays not authorised by the AP.

5.5 Persistent Absence

- Defined as attendance falling below 90%.
- Triggers a multi-agency Attendance Review Meeting.
- An Individual Attendance Plan (IAP) will be developed, addressing barriers and strategies for re-engagement.

5.6 Flexibility and Support

Given the complex needs of our pupils, the AP uses therapeutic re-engagement plans, reduced timetables, or off-site learning to support gradual reintegration.

Attendance expectations are adapted according to risk, wellbeing, and progress.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Proprietor / Head of Provision	Ensures compliance, oversight of admissions, and attendance monitoring.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Oversees all safeguarding-related absences and liaises with agencies.
Attendance Officer / Admin	Maintains daily registers, monitors trends, and contacts parents.
Teaching and Pastoral Staff	Record attendance accurately, encourage engagement, and support wellbeing.
Parents / Carers	Ensure attendance and communicate reasons for absence promptly.
Referring Schools / Agencies	Maintain involvement and support reintegration planning.

7. Attendance Procedures

7.1 Daily Registration

- Morning session: 9:00 – 9:15 a.m.
- Afternoon session: 1:15 – 1:30 p.m.
- Registers are completed electronically via the MIS (When installed) and CPOMS.
- Until the instalment of an MIS system, the registers will be recorded on an excel spreadsheet and uploaded to CPOMS at the end of each half term.

7.2 Reporting Absence

Parents/carers must contact the AP by phone or email before 9:00 a.m.

Unexplained absences trigger immediate follow-up contact and escalation if necessary.

7.3 Escalation

If no contact is made by the second day of absence:

- The DSL is informed.
 - A home welfare visit may be arranged.
 - If concerns persist, the case will be escalated to Children’s Services or the Local Authority CME Officer.
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8. Admissions and Attendance Registers

- The AP maintains both an Admissions Register and a Daily Attendance Register in compliance with the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006*.
 - Entries include pupil details, placement dates, and referring body.
 - Pupils will only be removed from roll in accordance with statutory guidance and local authority protocols.
 - All data is managed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
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9. Monitoring and Reporting

- Attendance data is reviewed weekly by the DSL and termly by the Proprietor.
 - Patterns of absence are analysed for safeguarding risk, SEND impact, and placement stability.
 - Attendance reports are shared with referring agencies and parents/carers each term.
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10. Promoting Engagement and Attendance

Reality Strikes Academy promotes attendance by:

- Building strong, trusting relationships with pupils and families.
 - Offering mentoring, key-worker support, and therapeutic intervention.
 - Recognising progress and celebrating improved attendance.
 - Collaborating with agencies to address social or environmental barriers to attendance.
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11. Safeguarding and Attendance

Attendance concerns are treated as safeguarding concerns.

All staff must report patterns of absence, unexplained lateness, or changes in presentation to the DSL immediately.

Absence without explanation for more than 10 consecutive school days will trigger a CME (Children Missing Education) referral to the local authority.

12. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or DfE guidance.

Next scheduled review: September 2026.

13. Appendices

- Appendix A: Attendance Codes
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Approval

Approved by:

Sam Woodhall – Proprietor & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 08/09/2025

Next Review: September 2026

Appendix 1

The registration system

The following DFE national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure/Absent due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.