



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Written by	Adopted by Governing Body	Review Date
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1. Introduction

At Riverview Federation of Schools (RFoS) we believe that attendance is strongly linked to students' motivation and academic achievement. Poor attendance and punctuality threaten the rights of young people to an effective education. This Attendance and Punctuality Policy states the responsibility of the school, student and parent/carer in securing good attendance and punctuality.

2. Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that Parents and Carers are responsible for ensuring their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a Parent or Carer who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- RFoS works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that Parents and Carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Fixed Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines or up to 3 months in prison.

3. Aims of Policy

The aims of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy are:

- To ensure all students attend RFoS regularly and punctually, in order to ensure they achieve academically and make the most of all opportunities offered
- Students whose attendance is a barrier to their academic success receive swift and targeted support in order to secure improvements, reducing absence, including persistent (less than 90%) and severe absence (less than 50%)
- Strong partnerships between RFoS and parents/carers are needed to secure good attendance.

All leaders within RFoS are relentless in their role to establish a positive learning climate, including outstanding attendance and punctuality. They are uncompromising in their expectations and challenge, where appropriate, colleagues, students and parents/carers.

4. Principles

- The aim of RFoS is to provide a safe and caring environment where every student can attend and engage with all opportunities offered.
- It is the responsibility of all staff, students and parents/carers to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Students and families may require support with regards to attendance and/or punctuality, and the staff at RFoS will endeavour to provide this.
- All students and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality will be challenged, but support will be provided to ensure strong partnership working
- Students will be rewarded for good attendance and punctuality.
- Riverview FFS will endeavour to implement rigorous and robust procedures for attendance and punctuality, providing accurate information to parents and carers.

- Students who have been absent from school for a prolonged period will have a personalised support programme to positively reintegrate them back into school.
- RFoS will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2003: 'Every Child Matters' by implementing this policy in a consistent manner.
- RFoS will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for students.

5. Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- We strive at RFoS to ensure all students have a curriculum that is appropriate for their needs and which allows them to be successful. The curriculum is reviewed annually and the Inclusion Manager monitors the curriculum of students who have additional needs.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance through tutor time and support is offered through their Tutor, Head of House, Learning Manager or Attendance Officer, if attendance is below 95%.
- Students whose attendance is below 90% are supported by the RFoS Attendance Team to make the necessary improvements to their attendance.
- Attendance at Baysgarth is celebrated every week in the Tutor PowerPoint and through regular attendance assemblies, where attendance is rewarded.
- Students with 100% Attendance are members of the 100% Attendance Club where attendance is rewarded regularly.
- Attendance at Castledyke is celebrated in line with the school house teams where attendance is calculated every half term and displayed in the hall on the attendance board. The highest achieving team will be rewarded.
- Students, parents and carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the Attendance Team at any time to discuss their child's attendance.
- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to reintegrate back into RFoS.
- Effective links are made with Primary Schools/nurseries to facilitate the smooth transition into Year 7/Reception.
- Attendance will be reported to parents/carers in line with reporting cycles.

6. Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of RFoS have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day RFoS is open and on time;
- Be punctual to all lessons;
- Ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons (including intervention and 1-1 sessions) and inform the Attendance Team if they cannot be registered for any reason;

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn;
- Ensure their child attends every day RFoS is open unless, they are too ill to do so;

- Avoid keeping their child away from school for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation;
- Avoid arranging holidays during term time; ensure a Leave of Absence form is completed and submitted to the school for a planned absence
- Immediately inform the Attendance Office or Student Support if their child is unable to attend before the start of the school day, including the reason for absence and expected date of return. If no indication of a return date has been given, parents and carers should contact the school on each day of absence;
- Contact their child's Learning Manager or the Attendance Officer if their child has a medical condition the school were not previously aware of which may affect attendance
- Ensure that where possible, appointments are made outside of the school day
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child

Teachers are expected to:

- Welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons.
- Accurately register students within the first 10 minutes of each and every period including double lessons. Lesson registration is a vital element in tracking post-registration truancy and records will be used by the Education Welfare Officer in communications with parents and carers, and as evidence in legal proceedings.
- Accurately record lateness using an 'L' mark and entering how many minutes late a student is to the lesson and apply an appropriate sanction if necessary, as per the Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure that students know the register is being taken and the importance of this legal document.
- Identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action using the school's Behaviour Policy, if appropriate.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- When completing the register, make sure that any discrepancies in attendance are reported to the Attendance Team immediately

Tutors are expected to:

- Discuss any periods of absence with students on their return and ensure any necessary information is passed to the relevant staff.
- Discuss attendance weekly with students and celebrate those students whose attendance is good or is improving.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and raise these with the Attendance Officer.
- Work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.
- Encourage their form to succeed in the attendance leagues.
- Contact home after 3 days of absence to promote the importance of good attendance.
- Contact home following 6 days of absence to discuss attendance and appropriate support to reduce absence and liaising with the Attendance Team
- Discuss attendance with parents and carers at Parents' Evenings, as appropriate.

Heads of House (Baysgarth only) are expected to:

- Promote good attendance regularly through Tutor activities and House assemblies.
- Ensure attendance is a priority for all Tutors.

Inclusion Manager/Learning Managers (Baysgarth only) are expected to:

- Provide targeted support for identified students, whose attendance is causing concern as per the escalation procedure.
- Meet with parents and carers to discuss barriers to attendance and agree support to improve attendance
- Ensure the weekly attendance for Looked After Children is monitored and interventions are planned through their Personalised Education Plan.
- Ensure attendance is a priority in all PSP's, EHA, CP and CIN Plans.
- Ensure all exclusions and isolation placements are communicated with the Attendance Officer.

Student Support/Reception staff are expected to:

- Receive calls and messages from parents and carers regarding student absence and ensure these are input into the communication log and communicated with the Attendance Officer.
- Contact parents and carers regarding student absence, where necessary.

Attendance Officer is expected to:

- Lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the school, including improving attendance and reducing persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure attendance is celebrated and rewarded on a regular basis for students who are members of the 100% Attendance Club
- Recognise and reward students who have improved their attendance and communicate this with parents and carers
- Ensure all registers are completed accurately and reliably, and inform Heads of Faculties and the Senior Leadership Team where there are persistent concerns
- Ensure all absence information and Leave of Absence forms are processed and recorded.
- Monitor daily and weekly attendance, absence and punctuality daily and implement appropriate attendance procedures.
- Provide a detailed weekly analysis of attendance and punctuality, which is shared with all Tutors, Heads of House, Inclusion Manager, Learning Managers and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and liaise with the appropriate members of staff ensuring all information is communicated effectively.
- Assign an Attendance Mentor to work with students whose attendance is becoming a cause for concern
- Provide targeted support for identified students, whose attendance is causing concern, as per the escalation procedure.
- Work collaboratively with outside agencies including the Local Authority, where appropriate, to improve attendance of individual students.
- Ensure the Education Welfare Officer has an active caseload and it is regularly reviewed for impact.
- Hold the Learning Managers and Attendance Mentors to account for the targeted work with individuals, in order to secure improvements to their attendance and/or punctuality.
- Provide attendance data for all Family Help meetings.
- Ensure all attendance intervention procedures and letters to parents and carers are in place prior to referrals to the Education Inclusion Service at the Local Authority for Statutory Intervention, including Fixed Penalty Notices.

7. Registration

Registers are legal documents and can be used in legal proceedings as evidence. Therefore, staff are expected to complete registers for all timetabled lessons, interventions and tutor time accurately and within the first 10 minutes of the published start time.

Baysgarth

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. Students will be registered in their lessons by their class teachers. The morning register closes 30 minutes after the published start of the school day, 8.25am. Students arriving before 8.55am will be recorded as 'L'- Late before the register closes. Students arriving after 8.55am will be marked as 'U'- Late after registers closed. This is classed as an unauthorised absence, unless a satisfactory explanation has been received. The afternoon register will close at 12.30pm on a Friday and 1325 Monday-Thursday.

Castledyke

The school day starts 8.45-9am soft start, the register is closed at 9am. 'L' is used between 9-9.10am and 'U' after 9.10am. Afternoon register is taken and closed at 1pm.

Headway

The AM session starts at 08:00, the register will shut at 08:30. The PM session starts at 12:30 and the register will shut at 13:00. If students arrive within 15 minutes of the session start they will be marked as late. If a student is more than 30 minutes late it will be classed as an unauthorised absence, unless a satisfactory explanation has been received. Contact home will be made for every student who has not attended. The Safeguarding Lead will investigate any unexplained absences.

The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published 2012 by the DfE.

8. Punctuality

RFoS places great importance on the need for punctuality in attending school and all lessons:

Baysgarth

- Baysgarth school gates close at 8.25am with students expected to be at their lesson by this time.
- Baysgarth students arriving after this time until 8.45am should enter through Reception and report to the member of staff on 'Late Gate' with their reason for lateness. Students arriving after 8.45am should report to Reception to be signed in.
- If no satisfactory explanation has been provided, the student will be issued with an attendance detention at break-time. Failure to attend this detention will cause the consequence to be escalated through the school's Behaviour Policy.
- When a student arrives late to a lesson, staff should request a reason for their lateness. Students who have a genuine reason for their lateness will be provided with a late slip. Students who are late and fail to provide a valid reason for the lateness will be issued a break detention.
- Repeated punctuality issues will be referred to the student's Learning Manager.

Castledyke

- Castledyke school gates open at 8.45am and close at 9am
- Castledyke students arriving after 9am must go to the Main Office and give a reason for the late absence.
- Repeated punctuality issues will be addressed with the Attendance Officer/SLT.

Headway

- The Headway gates close at 8:15 for the AM session and 13:15 for the PM session
- Any student that arrives late will be let in by a member of staff. The student will need to explain the reason for arriving late to this staff member.
- If no satisfactory explanation has been provided, the student will be issued with a negative on ClassDojo and a message will be sent to parents/carers.
- Repeated punctuality issues will be addressed by the Headway leadership team.

9. Leaving the School Site

Baysgarth

Any Key Stage 3 or 4 student who leaves the school premises during the day should go to Student Support where an 'Authorised Absence Pass' will be given, which gives permission for the student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before a pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside of the school by the Police or the Education Welfare Service.

Castledyke

Due to the age of the children at Castledyke, if they are leaving the premises during a school day, they must be collected by a parent or carer. Parents/carers must sign the child out at the Office. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought. The absence will then be marked accordingly and authorised. If no evidence is shown then an unauthorised mark will be recorded.

Headway

Any student who leaves the premises during the day should go to a member of the management team where an 'Authorised Absence Pass' will be given, which gives permission for the student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before a pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside of the school by the Police or the Education Welfare Service

10. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where RFoS has given approval for absence in advance, or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents and carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

Parents/carers should immediately inform the Attendance Team if their child is unable to attend before the start of the school day, including the reason for absence and expected date of return. If no indication of a return date has been given, parents and carers should contact the school on each day of absence.

Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Proof of the appointment should be sent to the Attendance Team or shown to the Reception staff prior to signing out or returning from the appointment.

Following an explanation from parents and carers regarding a student's absence, RFoS will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise or not, accordingly.

11. School Procedures for Dealing with Absence

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent or carer to explain the absence, the school will contact parents or carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents and carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be via phone calls by the child's Learning Manager or a member of the Attendance Team and/or an automated message. Parents and carers are then encouraged to contact the school directly to discuss the issue with the Attendance Officer.
- The school asks that parents and carers ensure that the school has the most up to date contact details at all times.
- If no parental contact has been possible through text or phone, an email will be sent requesting information regarding the absence and requesting parents and carers to contact the school directly.
- All absence notes will be retained.
- Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the school will write to parents or carers and/or invite the parents or carers into school or visit them at home.
- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated, despite intervention, the Attendance process will be followed. Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued in line with each relevant Local Authority's Code of Conduct.
- Please see appendix 1 for a flow chart detailing school actions for student absences.

12. Persistent Absence

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason (student's attendance is below 90%). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' and carers' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the Persistence Absence threshold, or is at risk of moving towards that threshold, is given priority for intervention.

Where parents and carers fail to cooperate with support and strategies provided by RFoS, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

13. Leave of Absence during Term Time

Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence: please refer to the Department of Education for the latest guidance.

Parents and carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time. Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

It is expected that a Leave of Absence is submitted to the Attendance Officer at least four weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the Leave of Absence Form. The Headteacher will then consider the circumstances and the school's decision will be communicated in writing to the parent or carer. The Headteacher will only authorise these requests if there are extenuating circumstances.

RFoS has the right to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice on parents and carers who insist on taking their child(ren) out of school without authorisation. Fixed Penalty Notices require each parent to pay a fine of £80 per child if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the school.

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors	Signed: _____ Headteacher
Date: _____	Date: _____

Appendix 1

Universal attendance procedures

