

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
'EXCELLENCE FOR ALL'



Partnership Learning

Ratified by Governors: November 2023

To be reviewed: September 2024



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Review Frequency: Every year

Date of ratification: November 2023

Date next review due: September 2024

Scope of Plan: This plan applies to all staff, students, governors and volunteers at Riverside Bridge School

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Updated following the release of the Working Together to Improve School Attendance in May 2022
[- Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At Riverside Bridge School we are committed to ensuring that all pupils receive the highest quality of education and are able to achieve their full potential. Excellent attendance and punctuality is a key pre-requisite for achieving this.
- 1.2 The target attendance for all pupils registered at this school is 95% or above.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (PARENTS AND CARERS)

- 2.1 The school works in close partnership with parents/carers to achieve excellent school attendance and punctuality. The responsibilities of parents/carers in relation to attendance are set out in this policy.
- 2.2 The law states that parents/carers have responsibilities for ensuring their child attends school regularly. Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996)
- 2.3 It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school on time and are picked up promptly at the end of the day.
- 2.4 If a child is going to be absent, parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of absence. They should state the reason for their child's absence and also the date they are expected to return to school. If there is no contact the school will make contact with the parent/carer on the first day of absence. On their child's return to school, parents/carers should complete and return a 'Return to School' slip for any absence including half a day or one day absences, with any evidence to support your child's absence from school i.e. appointment letters, copy of prescription, etc.
- 2.5 All routine medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school time. When it is essential to have a non-routine appointment during the school day, evidence (such as an appointment card or hospital letter) must be provided in advance. There may be times when the parent/carer will be asked to provide further medical evidence for their child's absence.
- 2.6 Parents/carers should ensure that the child is brought to school before the appointment and returned to school afterwards.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (GOVERNING BODY)

- 3.1 The governing body has responsibility for the school attendance strategy and for approving the Attendance and Punctuality Policy every year.
- 3.2 The governing body will receive updates on attendance at least termly.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The roles of the Deputy Headteacher are:

- ensure that the school meets the legal requirements for all aspects of school attendance and punctuality as set in the Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance (May 2022).
- Have an attendance policy which meets the expectations outlined in the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance (May 2022) , and which is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents/carers and staff.
- ensure attendance are accurately recorded in the register and share the required information with DfE and local authorities.
- work effectively with local partners to help remove the barriers to attendance that go beyond the school gates, including building strong links with local statutory services (including social care, health and police) and the voluntary and community sector.
- ensure dedicated attendance training is provided to any staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. In addition, this should include: the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data, any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.
- recommends targets for attendance for the senior leadership team and the governing body, and to monitor them.
- ensure training on attendance is included in the school(s)' continued professional development offer for all staff. . As a minimum this should include all staff understanding: the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances, the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers, the school/trusts' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance, the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.
- ensure staff monitor attendance of the pupils in their class by completing the registers accurately and in time.
- report regularly to the Headteacher, Governors and parents/carers about attendance figures and any issues.
- authorise or not authorise any term time absences and inform the parents of the decision.
- correspond with parents where a child has been absent and no contact has been made.
- produce weekly reports on attendance and punctuality.
- liaise with Partnership Learning Attendance Officer as required.
- manage the procedure for persistent absences.
- liaise with the Local Authority Attendance Lead on a termly basis to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and signposting to support services where appropriate.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CLASS TEACHER AND CO-EDUCATORS)

5.1 The class-based staff have a vital role to play in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality.

Their responsibilities are:

- to ensure that they are available to collect children from the buses/parents/carers at 9:10am
- to complete the online registers by 9:30am in the morning and by 1:40pm in the afternoon each day.
- to ensure 'Return to School' slips have been completed by parents and handed in to the Attendance Clerk.
- to raise any safeguarding concerns relating to attendance or punctuality with the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Headteacher. This includes any absence for more than 3 days.
- to discuss attendance and punctuality issues with parents and share attendance figures at Parent's Evenings.

6.0 PUNCTUALITY (ARRIVING TO SCHOOL)

6.1 Excellent attendance includes pupils being on time for school every day.

6.2 The doors opened at 9:10am. School starts at 9:15am. It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to ensure that their child is in school before 9:15am. Any children coming after this time are late and a reason for the lateness will be recorded. Any child arriving late will be recorded at 'U – Late (after register has closed)'. This will affect your child's attendance.

6.3 If a child is late, the following procedure is followed:

- Late children need to be signed into reception by the parents on the late sheets, giving the date, child's name, child's class, time of arrival and reason for lateness
- The reception staff will arrange for a member of staff to come and collect the child from the reception area. It is the parent/carers responsibility to wait with the child until a member of staff arrives
- The child will be marked as late on the electronic register by the attendance officer including the reason and time of arrival.
- Patterns of lateness will be monitored and reported to the attendance officer, which may result in either a letter or a meeting.

- Registers will be kept open for a maximum of 30 minutes after the morning and afternoon sessions start. Any child arriving before the register closes will be marked with Code L, which counts as a present mark. Any child who arrives after the register closes, will be marked with Code U, or any other absence code which relates to the reason why that child did not arrive before the close of the register (i.e. Code M if they had a dental/medical appointment, or Code C if the pupil is on a part-time/modified timetable).

7.0 PUNCTUALITY (DEPARTING SCHOOL)

7.1 The school day ends at 3:15pm. After school clubs end at 4:30pm.

- 7.2 When a parent/carer does not collect their child within ten minutes of the end of the day the child is deemed to be late. This is 3:25pm for a normal school day and 4:40pm for after school clubs.
- 7.3 If a child is late the following procedure is followed:
- Late children will be marked into the late sheets.
 - The parent/carer will be asked to record the reason for lateness when they arrive.
 - The staff will record the time that the child was collected.
 - If a parent/carer is late picking up their child on more than one occasion, a meeting will be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
 - If a child continues to be collected late, a referral will be made to the MASH team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).
- 7.4 Staff will make every attempt to contact parents/carers up until 3:45pm (5:00pm if attended an after-school club). If the child remains uncollected and no contact has been made by these times, an immediate referral will be made to the MASH team where advice will be sought from the duty senior social worker. Any previous late collections will be shared with the MASH team.
- 7.5 If the child remains uncollected by 4:15pm (5:30pm if attended an after-school club) a second call will be made to the MASH team to agree the next steps.
- 7.6 Children who are escorted to school by borough transport will be taken to their usual pick up/drop off point. If the parent/carer is not at the designated meeting point at the designated time the bus escort/driver will attempt to make contact with the parent. If no contact is made the child will be transported to a place of safety by the bus escort/driver.

8.0 PERSISTENT ABSENCE

- 8.1 Persistent absence is where a child's attendance falls below set thresholds. In those instances, the following stages are used to resolve the situation (unless there is a valid reason for the attendance level, such as a prolonged period in hospital)

Stage One

- 8.2 If attendance is between 95-92%, a letter is sent home to the parent/carer notifying them that the school is monitoring the attendance levels of that pupil, stating that there needs to be an improvement in the pupil's attendance.
- 8.3 If attendance falls below 92% the parent carer will be sent a letter seeking the parent/carer to provide medical evidence for any future absences.
- 8.3 A meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Partnership Learning Attendance Officer and the parents to discuss any issues and agree a way forward is arranged.

Stage Two

8.4 When a pupil's attendance does not improve following action at Stage One or attendance falls below 87% appropriate action is taken by the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer to resolve the situation. This may include:

- Direct work with the pupil and family
- Referral to other agencies
- Arranging suitable support to help the pupil in making a return to full attendance
- Legal proceedings under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers. There is an appeals process for parents who have received and contest a fixed penalty notice.

9.0 HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

9.1 Parents/carers who request absences in term time must complete the necessary form (available from the school).

9.2 It is expected that parents plan holidays and any requests for leave are planned for during school holiday periods. Holidays and requests for leave will not be authorised in term time and may incur a fixed penalty notice. All fixed penalty notices are discussed with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer before being issued.

10.0 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

10.1 Children missing in education are those who are:

- known to have lived in Barking and Dagenham, or attended school here, and their whereabouts are unconfirmed, or unknown (this includes those that have been reported to have moved either within the UK but outside of the Barking and Dagenham Boundaries or abroad either to live or study)
- known to be residing in Barking and Dagenham's boundaries and are believed not to be in education
- whose parents claim to be providing elective home education but, as a result of the local authority's informal enquiries, are believed not to be in receipt of suitable and efficient education.

10.2 If a child becomes known as a Child Missing in Education, the EHC (Education Health Care) Team, the MASH team and the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer will be informed immediately.

10.3 In some cases the police will be made aware in order to safeguard the child and discover more details on the child's whereabouts by generating a 'Merlin' report that will be sent to the MASH team.

Appendix 1: Attendance and Punctuality Routines

| Daily | Weekly | Half Termly / Termly |
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| SLT's Roles and Responsibilities | | |
| <p>Monitor absence requests received by parents and inform parents of decision.</p> | <p>Monitor weekly attendance data with school attendance clerk.</p> <p>Meet with class staff where attendance is below expectation.</p> <p>Refer persistent lates to Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Fortnightly meetings with Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Hold parent meetings.</p> | <p>Discuss progress in achieving attendance and punctuality targets at SLT meetings.</p> <p>Present attendance and punctuality report to Local Governing Board.</p> <p>Communicate progress in achieving attendance and punctuality targets to parents/carers in newsletter.</p> |
| In-School Attendance Clerk's Role & Responsibilities | | |
| <p>Ensure the entrance is closed at 9:30am and 3:25pm.</p> <p><u>First day Absences</u> Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and reasons noted on SIMS.</p> <p><u>Second day absences</u> Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and have not provided a reason.</p> <p><u>Third day absences</u> Inform SLT of a child who has been absent for 3 days without contact from the parents/carers</p> <p>Record children brought into school late or picked up late from school.</p> <p>Send out 'N' code letters.</p> <p>Ensure 'Return to School' slips are being completed by parents/carers when their child is absent for any reason.</p> | <p><u>Five Days Absence</u> Inform SLT & DSL for attendance if a child has had a five consecutive day absence even if reasons are given from parents/carers.</p> <p>Keep-up-to-date punctuality record sheets and share with SLT.</p> <p>Meet with SLT to check attendance and punctuality weekly.</p> | <p>Provide attendance and punctuality reports necessary for parents' evenings, annual review meetings, etc.</p> |

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| Partnership Learning Attendance Officer's Role & Responsibilities | | |
| Send out letters to parents regarding attendance & punctuality concerns. | <p>Complete attendance records and send to SLT.</p> <p>Analyse data and meet with SLT fortnightly.</p> <p>Arrange meetings with Parents and SLT.</p> <p>Agree with SLT and issued fixed penalty notices in line with the local authority.</p> <p>Discuss with SLT absence requests received by parents and inform parents of decision.</p> | Letters of concern/improvement to Parents. |
| Staff's Roles and Responsibilities | | |
| <p>Ensure online registers are completed by 9:30am and 1:40pm.</p> <p><u>Third day absences</u> Inform SLT of a child who has been absent for 3 days without contact from the parents/carers.</p> | <p><u>Five Days Absence</u> Inform SLT & DSL for attendance if a child has had a five consecutive day absence even if reasons are given from parents/carers.</p> | Discuss attendance with parents at Parents' Evening. |