

The Ryde School

Attendance Policy



Reviewed: February 2019
Next Review: February 2022

Attendance Policy

Introduction

At The Ryde School we expect all stakeholders to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality. Good attendance and punctuality help pupils to make a good start to the day and maximises their learning potential. This policy is intended to support the school in achieving and maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality. Missing out on lessons leaves pupils vulnerable to falling behind. Pupils with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary schools.

Pupils, who are on roll at The Ryde School, are expected to attend every day in term time and to arrive on time. All pupils should be dressed according to the school's Uniform Policy and be ready for the school day, as long as they are fit and well enough to do so.

The governors at The Ryde School ensure procedures are in place that encourages all pupils to attend school regularly. We work hard to ensure the ethos at The Ryde School supports pupils to feel happy and safe at school and to be positive about their learning. We work hard to support pupils who are unable to attend school full time by making the best provision we can for them.

Under the '*Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*' the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them. (see Appendix 1)

The Ryde School will:

- provide a safe learning environment
- ensure registers of attendance are kept in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 on a twice daily basis
- ensure all instances of absence, poor attendance and poor punctuality are fully investigated and accounted for

Parents/carers should:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- ensure that they are aware of the school's attendance policy and impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct

- ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour, attending parents' evenings and any other relevant meetings
- work in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify their children's school if they are absent. This should be done on every day of the absence. Parents/carers should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed - preferably in writing - when their child/ren return to school
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- should not book holidays during term time

The pupils will:

- attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually
- remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person
- be in dressed in school uniform (except Nursery pupils) and be ready to learn

The School Day

- The school gate opens at 8:35 a.m. The classroom doors open at 8:40 a.m. Lessons begins at 8.50 a.m. and finish at 3:00p.m.
- The school nursery starts at 8:45 a.m. and finishes at 11:45 a.m.
- The school playground is not supervised before the classroom doors open and pupils in the playground remain the responsibility of their parents or carers until their children enter the building. Parents and carers are encouraged to time their arrival with the opening of the classroom doors and if necessary, to keep their children with them before this time.

Registration

The school registers are legal documents and every care is taken to ensure that they are filled in accurately and correctly. Registers will be completed using the 'Marking of Attendance Registers' in accordance with *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*.

- Registration is an integral part of the school day and all pupils need to be present in their classrooms at the start of the school day by 8:50a.m. in order to be marked present.
- Registers will be completed using the 'Marking of Attendance Registers' (Taken from Instructions for Implementing the new DfES Codes in Attendance 2006) (Appendix 2).
- The register will be taken between 8:40a.m. and 8.50a.m. at the start of the morning session and at 1.00pm at the start of the afternoon session.

- Pupils arriving after these times will be marked as 'late' but present for the session.
- Once the register has been taken it is returned to the office as soon as possible.
- Registers close at 9.00 a.m. For pupils arriving after the register has closed, the morning session will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Lateness

- Pupils arriving after the school gate has closed at 8:50 a.m. must be signed in by a parent or guardian at the school office and will be marked as late.
- If lateness is planned e.g. for a medical or dental appointment, parents should inform the school, on the previous day or as soon as the appointment is made and show evidence of this i.e. appointment letter or card. Following an appointment, pupils arriving after the registers have closed are marked with a medical absence.
- For parents whose pupils are regularly late for school the following procedures will be followed:
 - I. For a regular pattern of lateness over a four-week period: first late letter sent (Appendix 3)
 - II. If no improvement: second late letter sent inviting parent into school for a meeting with Headteacher (Appendix 4).
 - III. If no improvement: referral to Attendance and Improvement Officer.

Absences

- Notification must be provided for all absences from school by the child's parents or carers.
- Absences are authorised by the Headteacher or Deputy Head Teacher.
- School may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.
- Notification of absence must be in the form of a telephone call on every day of absence to the school office.
- If a request for absence is made, this will be considered by the Headteacher and parents/carers informed of the decision. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances which may relate to the child's education e.g. for music examinations or on compassionate grounds e.g. death of a close relative.
- Term time holiday absence will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.
- Absences will not be authorised retrospectively.
- If a child is absent for reasons of long term sickness, the school will keep in regular contact with the child's parents/carers.
- For pupils whose attendance falls below the school's target of 96.1%, the following procedures will be followed:
 - I. 96% attendance – child is flagged on the school system: first absence letter sent to parents warning that child's attendance is below the expected attendance level (Appendix 5).
 - II. 93% attendance: second absence letter sent inviting parent into school for a meeting with the Headteacher (Appendix 6).

- III. Below 90% attendance – a child’s attendance is flagged as a Persistent Absence and a letter is sent to parents warning parents/carers of this and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter (Appendix 7).
 - IV. If no improvement: issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice.
- There may be reason at any time during this process to involve other agencies to support the family : Children’s Services, Family Support Worker, School Nurse etc.
 - Hertfordshire County Council procedures are followed in cases of exclusion.

Safeguarding

The Ryde School takes its responsibility for the safeguarding of its pupils very seriously and works hard to ensure all pupils are accounted for and safe.

- The school follows up absences for all pupils whose absence has not been confirmed by a parent/carer on that day. This is done by the admin staff after scrutiny of the registers.
- A member of the admin team will try to contact the parent/carer as soon as the registers have been checked. All efforts will be made to contact parents/carers by phone, email and text.
- If no contact has been made by 10:00 a.m. other named contacts will be contacted to assist the school in making contact with the pupil’s parents/carers.
- If no contact has been made with the pupil’s parents/carers by 10:30 a.m. then either the Attendance Officer will be called for advice or the police will be contacted to make a door knock call, depending on the circumstances of the family or the level of concern about the pupil’s safety.

Term Time Holidays

- The Ryde School does not authorise leave of absence for holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- An application must be made in advance in writing, including supporting documentation, to the Headteacher and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.
- If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, 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 leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Taking a pupil off roll

When The Ryde School notifies Hertfordshire County Council that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, it provides them with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable
- the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register

The Ryde School will notify Hertfordshire Count Council of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Appendix 1:**ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS**

It is expected that attendance at The Ryde School will be in line with national expectations of 96.4%. Every pupil is expected to have an attendance of at least 96.4%. It is inevitable that at some point in a pupil's education some sickness will occur and this percentage takes this into consideration. There are however, some genuine exceptions to this and, because of this, pupils will be considered on an individual needs basis.

It is also expected that pupils will not be late for the start of the school day or for the afternoon session.

Absences

	Attendance Percentage	Number of Absences (half days)
Excellent	100%	0
Good	96.1% and above	16
Fair	90% and above	38
Poor	Below 90%	More than 38

Punctuality

	Lateness Percentage	Number of Lates (half days)
Excellent	0%	0
Good	2.6%	10
Fair	5.2%	20
Poor	Higher than 5.2%	More than 20

Appendix 2:**ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANING**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	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	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 3:

FIRST LATE LETTER

Dear

I am concerned to note that _____ has been arriving late for school recently. According to our records, your child has been late _____ times this half term, missing _____ minutes (nearly _____ hours) with no satisfactory explanation given.

You will appreciate that regular lateness adversely affects not only your own son's/daughter's education, but disrupts other children's learning too. When a child arrives late he/she misses: the introduction to the lesson, when previous learning is revisited in preparation for the work to be covered that day and when objectives and activities are explained. The teacher cannot repeat the full introduction for the late-comer, but any time spent settling him/her to the set tasks means all the other children in the class are not getting the attention they deserve; this is unfair and everyone's education is damaged.

Please make every effort to ensure that your son/daughter arrives at school promptly every day in future.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact the school to discuss these with the Headteacher.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Thompson

Appendix 4:

SECOND LATE LETTER

Dear

I am concerned to note that despite my earlier letter, _____'s punctuality has not improved. He/she has now been late on _____ occasions in the past four weeks. As I have previously advised you, lateness adversely affects not only your own son's/daughter's education, but disrupts other children's learning too.

Please come to school on _____ at _____ to discuss this situation with me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Thompson

Appendix 5:

FIRST ABSENCE LETTER

A whole year has 365 days
A school only has 190 days
This leaves: 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments

100% attendance	= 190 days attendance	= 0 absence
95% attendance	= 180 days attendance	= 2 weeks absence
90% attendance	= 171 days attendance	= 4 weeks absence
85% attendance	= 161 days attendance	= 6 weeks absence
80% attendance	= 152 days attendance	= more than a half term absence

Dear

The Ryde School is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all of its pupils. Any pupil whose attendance falls below 96% will be monitored, and as a parent I am sure you will agree that your child must attend school regularly to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained from the education provided.

I enclose a copy of school attendance record. You will see that the attendance is now %, which I am sure you will agree, is a cause for concern.

I will continue to monitor your child's school attendance and, with your co-operation, I anticipate a gradual improvement.

If you wish to discuss with me your child's absence, please make an appointment at the School Office.

Yours sincerely

Sue Thompson

Appendix 6:

SECOND ABSENCE LETTER

A whole year has 365 days
A school only has 190 days
This leaves: 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments

100% attendance	= 190 days attendance	= 0 absence
95% attendance	= 180 days attendance	= 2 weeks absence
90% attendance	= 171 days attendance	= 4 weeks absence
85% attendance	= 161 days attendance	= 6 weeks absence
80% attendance	= 152 days attendance	= more than a half term absence

Dear

Following on from the previous letter that I sent to you on _____, we have continued to monitor _____'s attendance. As you are aware, any pupil whose attendance falls below 96% will be monitored, and as a parent I am sure you will agree that your child must attend school regularly to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained from the education provided.

I enclose a copy of your child's school attendance record. You will see that the attendance is now _____%, which I am sure you will agree, is a cause for concern.

I do understand that s/he may be ill at certain times of the year but due to her/him missing so much time at school, I am writing to inform you that I am unwilling to authorise any more absences unless medical evidence is provided. Examples of evidence that the school is willing to accept are: a medical appointment letter/card (must have the pupil's name, date and time of appointment) or copy of prescription or prescription label on the medication.

I will be consulting with the attendance officer to seek advice on the appropriate action but in the meantime I hope that _____'s attendance will improve.

Yours sincerely

Sue Thompson

Appendix 7:

BREACH OF REGULATIONS LETTER

A whole year has 365 days
A school only has 190 days
This leaves: 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments

100% attendance	= 190 days attendance	= 0 absence
95% attendance	= 180 days attendance	= 2 weeks absence
90% attendance	= 171 days attendance	= 4 weeks absence
85% attendance	= 161 days attendance	= 6 weeks absence
80% attendance	= 152 days attendance	= more than a half term absence

Dear

The Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007
, Registered pupil at The Ryde School

This is a formal warning that you are at risk of being in breach of the regulations stated above. Your child, , has been absent from school and the absence has not been authorised.

Should the number of unauthorised absence sessions reach 15 or more in the current and/or previous term you will be in breach if the regulations and the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice.

The notice requires you to pay a penalty of £60 within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Each parent is liable to pay a separate penalty and penalty notices are issued for each child to whom the absence relates.

Payment of the penalty enables you to discharge your liability for the offence for the period in question of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. (section 444, The Education Act 1996).

Failure to pay the penalty means you are liable to prosecution for the offence, by summons to appear before the local Magistrates Court. On conviction you may be liable for a fine of up to £1,000 per parent. This is a criminal offence which carries a criminal record. The Local Authority will ask for costs of £125 to be awarded against you.

If you fail to ensure your child attends regularly and 15 sessions of unauthorised absence is reached a penalty notice will be issued. You will not receive a further warning before the penalty is imposed.

If you believe there are legitimate reasons for your child's absence, please contact me within 5 working days to discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely

Sue Thompson