



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

St Richard Reynolds Catholic Primary School

Policy: Attendance and Punctuality

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Introduction:

If pupils are to achieve their full potential, high attendance rates are essential. St Richard Reynolds Catholic College will support parents and pupils in achieving excellent attendance. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their pupils attend. As part of the Home-School Partnership the school is committed to working with parents/carers for the benefit of pupils to achieve their best in all aspects of school life.

Rationale:

If pupils are to achieve their full potential, high attendance rates are essential. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

- to age, ability and aptitude and
- 'to any special educational need, he/she may have either by regular school or otherwise'.

Aim

- To achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. It is the School aim that at St Richard Reynolds Catholic College, pupils and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils and staff.

We will achieve this by:

- Keeping regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at registration and at the start of each lesson
- Monitoring every pupil's attendance and punctuality
- Having clear procedures for reporting absence
- Ensuring high standards of punctuality
- Providing a welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment and provide a sympathetic response to any pupil or parent's concerns;
- Referring irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service.
- Celebrating and rewarding good attendance

Absence Procedures:

- Teachers mark the register at 8.50am and 1.00pm using SIMS lesson Monitor
- Parents/carers are asked to telephone or email the school each day if a child is unable to attend school. The school office team will note the call and put the appropriate mark in the register along with a comment explaining the absence.
- On the first day of absence, if no email or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9am the College will endeavour to contact them that day by telephone or email messages. All named contacts for the student will be contacted until a reason for absence is determined. If no contact is established after leaving relevant messages with all named contacts the College will report the absence to the police.
- Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of College hours. Where absence is unavoidable, parents must seek permission in advance by emailing attendance@srrcc.org.uk. This should be done 24hrs in advance unless an emergency appointment.
- On return to school a note should be presented to explain the period of absence, accompanied by a doctor's note or equivalent where possible.
- Pupils in need of antibiotics or prescription medicine must complete a permission form to allow staff to administer antibiotics/medicine. Caution will be exercised if staff have not had appropriate medical training required to administer medication/treatment.

Absence

Sickness and diarrhoea

- In the event of illness through sickness or diarrhoea we follow the NHS guidelines and advise that pupils should not return to school until **48 hours** after the symptoms have passed.

Contagious illnesses

- Please inform the school if your child has a contagious illness or infection so we can advise on their return to school.

Understanding Types of Absence / Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement to take an attendance register twice a day. Registers are taken in the morning and afternoon. Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm. This shows whether the Pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a Pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from College is classified as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Only the College can authorise the absence, not parents/carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required. The College is required to keep records of attendance and to return figures to the Local Authority (LA) of absences under two categories.

How the College will support Pupils with poor attendance:

Examples of poor attendance include particular patterns of absence (e.g. certain days of week or missing days at the end or beginning of term) and missing ten days of school, whether authorised or unauthorised. Parents/carers whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the College at an early stage and work together with the staff to resolve any problems. The College can use a range of strategies to support good attendance including support from the Class teacher / Inclusion Manager or a personalised Attendance Plan. Support can also be sought from external agencies such as the Strengthening Families Team. The College recognises that some groups of pupils, such as those with medical conditions, may struggle to maintain good attendance and will support pupils, for example, by providing work if absence is on medical grounds.

The College will keep parents informed about attendance through end of year reports. Where there is a concern about attendance, parents will be informed by letter. Letters about attendance will be sent when a pupil's attendance drops below 96%. If no improvement is seen, monitoring letters will be sent to inform parents that their child's attendance will be monitored over a period of four weeks.

Education Welfare Service

The College will refer the child to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) if

- Attendance is below 90%
- A Pupil has missed 10 or more sessions

The EWO will try to resolve the situation by working directly with the family and College. In some cases, a referral to another agency may be appropriate. If attendance remains poor over time following the College's work to improve it in collaboration with parents/carers and the formal involvement of the EWO, the EWO may use legal action which can result in the parent/carer being taken to court and being fined.

Parents/carers or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. The Education Welfare Service can be contacted through Richmond Single Point of Access at 020 8891 7969 or spa@richmond.gov.uk

Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. If a student does not attend school for a maximum of 5 continuous days, with no contact made by Parent/Carer, the child will be regarded as a Child Missing Education and passed on to the EWS. The College will attempt to contact the parent or carer. If after 20 consecutive days of absence the child is still missing from education and no contact has been established, the College will remove the student from the School Roll, after confirmation with the Education Welfare Service.

Removal from roll

If a pupil moves school, a letter from the parent/carer is required including a forwarding address and the name and address of the new school. The child will not be removed from roll until the school receives written confirmation from the new school that the child is on roll. The College will inform the local authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

Responsibility for Attendance and Punctuality

Parents are responsible for:

- ensuring that their child is in school on time.
- providing explanations for absence promptly.
- supporting the College by reinforcing the importance of excellent attendance.

The **Principal** has overall responsibility for monitoring and reporting attendance at St Richard Reynolds Catholic College. Attendance is monitored by Head of Primary School and the College Attendance Department who are responsible for:

- deciding what constitutes authorised/unauthorised absence.
- writing to parents whose child's attendance is a cause for concern.
- ensuring that teachers complete registers accurately.
- meeting with parents of children whose attendance falls below 90%.
- working with the EWO and other external agencies as appropriate to ensure that parents and students can access support where needed.
- ensuring the Child Missing Education procedures are followed.

The **Attendance Team** are responsible for:

- following the College's procedures for first day contact.
- issuing attendance letters.
- advising the Head of Primary of any teacher who fails to maintain the register properly.
- providing data on fortnightly basis to the Head of Primary.
- ensuring the Head of Primary / Inclusion Manager are aware of families where bad habits are forming.
- collating data for inclusion in reports and attendance returns to the LA.
- checking and filing all absence notes that are received, and ensure that details are reflected appropriately through categorisation of absence in the registers.
- passing on messages from parents efficiently to the class teacher or other relevant member of staff.

Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are essential to ensuring that your child gets the most out of their time at school. They are also important life skills that your child will need as they become young adults and enter the world of work.

- Please ensure that your child arrives in time for the start of school at 8.50am. Pupils and their parents/carers can arrive on site from 8.40am. Late arrivals are disruptive for the child who is late and also for the other pupils who will have begun lessons. No pupils should be on the school grounds before 8.40 unless they have a club.

- Any pupils who are late should be taken to the main college office to be registered and not taken directly to the classroom.
- Prompt pick-ups after school are also really important. Pupils can become distressed when waiting for parents and looking after them requires supervision which deflects staff from other important work. Please phone us if you are going to be late. School finishes at 3:10 for Reception and 3.15pm for Years 1-6.
- If parents/carers are more than 10 minutes late after the end of the school day pupils will be taken to the main office for collection.

Index to Legislation:

These are key pieces of legislation governing pupil registration in schools.

The paragraphs which are particularly relevant to attendance are as follows:

Statutory Instruments 1995, No 2089

Education, England and Wales

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995

1. Reasons for authorised absence – page 5, paragraph 7.3
2. Leave of Absence – page 6, paragraph 8
3. Deletion from Register – page 6,7, paragraph 9
4. Dual Registration – page 8, paragraph 10
5. Inspection of Registers – page 9, paragraph 11
6. Reporting Absences to LEA – page 9,10, paragraph 13
7. Preservation of Registers – page 10, paragraph 15
8. Use of Computers – page 11, paragraph 16

Statutory Instruments 2001, No 2802

Education, England