



Riversdale Primary School

A nurturing, ambitious and values led school.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

DATE: 5th January 2026

REVIEW DATE: 4th January 2027

INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is essential for pupils to achieve their full potential and to benefit fully from the educational opportunities available to them.

Riversdale Primary School is committed to promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils. We believe that children learn best when they attend school regularly, arrive on time and are ready to engage in learning.

The school works in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that pupils attend school every day unless they are unwell or there are exceptional circumstances.

This policy reflects the expectations set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote excellent attendance and punctuality
- ensure absence is identified and addressed early
- work in partnership with families to overcome barriers to attendance
- ensure that attendance procedures are fair, transparent and consistently applied
- support pupils whose attendance may be a cause for concern.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Headteacher/Attendance Lead

The Headteacher is the school's Attendance Lead and has overall responsibility for the strategic leadership of attendance across the school.

The Headteacher will:

- monitor whole-school attendance data regularly
- identify patterns and trends in absence
- oversee the school's graduated response to attendance concerns (Appendix 1)
- working with families to identify and address barriers to attendance
- ensure appropriate interventions are implemented
- work with the Local Authority where attendance concerns require escalation.

Learning Mentor

The Learning Mentor supports pupils and families where attendance concerns arise.

Responsibilities include:

- monitoring the attendance of pupils identified by the Headteacher
- undertaking weekly check-ins with key pupils whose attendance is a concern
- working with the Headteacher and pupils to identify and address barriers to attendance
- supporting attendance meetings and support plans where applicable.

School Receptionist

The School Receptionist plays a key role in maintaining accurate daily attendance records.

Responsibilities include:

- maintaining accurate attendance registers
- ensuring registers are completed in a timely manner
- initiating first-day contact where pupils are absent and no explanation has been received
- recording absence information provided by parents or carers.

DAILY ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The school register is taken twice daily, once at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon.

It is a legal requirement for schools to maintain accurate attendance registers.

Parents and carers must inform the school as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances.

Where no explanation is received, the school will contact parents or carers to establish the reason for absence.

FIRST-DAY CONTACT

Where a pupil is absent and the school has not received an explanation, the school will contact parents or carers on the first day of absence.

This is typically carried out by the school receptionist.

The purpose of first-day contact is to:

- ensure the safety of pupils
- confirm the reason for absence
- maintain accurate attendance records.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Headteacher with support from the Learning Mentor and Receptionist.

The school reviews attendance data to identify pupils whose attendance may be declining or causing concern.

Early identification allows the school to provide support before attendance becomes a more serious issue.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

Riversdale Primary School actively promotes a culture where excellent attendance is expected, valued and celebrated.

Strategies used to promote good attendance include:

- termly attendance expectation letters sent to parents and carers
- regular communication with families about the importance of attendance
- monitoring attendance data to identify improvement or emerging concerns
- recognition for pupils who demonstrate significant improvement in attendance

The Learning Mentor and Headteacher may provide recognition and rewards for pupils who make significant improvements in their attendance, particularly where sustained effort has been made to overcome barriers.

PUNCTUALITY

Arriving at school on time is essential to ensure that pupils are settled and ready to learn.

Late arrival can:

- disrupt learning
- cause pupils to miss important teaching and instructions
- impact the learning of others.

Registers are taken at the start of the school day.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be recorded using the appropriate national attendance code.

Persistent lateness will be monitored by the school and may result in:

- communication with parents or carers
- meetings to discuss punctuality concerns
- inclusion in the school's graduated response to attendance concerns.

The school works with families to ensure pupils arrive on time and ready to learn each day.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

A pupil is considered persistently absent when their attendance falls below 90%.

Where attendance reaches this level, the school will work closely with families to understand the reasons for absence and implement appropriate support.

SEVERE ABSENCE

A pupil is considered severely absent when their attendance falls below 50%.

Severe absence is treated as a serious concern and the school will work with the Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Parents and carers are strongly discouraged from taking children out of school during term time.

Leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance.

The decision to authorise leave rests with the Headteacher.

Where leave is taken without authorisation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Riversdale Primary School recognises that attendance difficulties can arise for a variety of reasons.

The school is committed to working with families in a supportive and constructive way to address barriers to attendance.

Support may include:

- meetings with parents or carers
- attendance support plans
- pastoral support for pupils
- regular communication with families.

WORKING WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Where attendance concerns persist despite school support, the school may seek support from the Local Authority Attendance Service.

This may include further advice, support and formal attendance procedures where appropriate.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body to ensure it reflects current legislation, guidance and best practice.

APPENDIX 1: GRADUATED RESPONSE TO ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

STAGE	ATTENDANCE LEVEL	SCHOOL RESPONSE
Universal Expectation	96–100%	Good attendance promoted through positive culture, regular monitoring and communication with families.
Early Concern	Below 95%	Attendance monitored more closely. Informal contact with parents may be made to discuss attendance.
Stage 1: Attendance Concern	Around 92–94%	Stage 1 letter issued. Parents may be invited to discuss concerns. Learning Mentor may begin monitoring attendance more closely.
Stage 2: Risk of Persistent Absence	Around 90–92%	Meeting with parents to explore barriers. Attendance support plan may be agreed. Learning Mentor may undertake regular pupil check-ins.
Stage 3: Persistent Absence	Below 90%	Formal attendance meeting. Attendance contract or support plan implemented. Increased monitoring.
Stage 4: Escalation	Continued decline despite support	Referral to Local Authority Attendance Service and further action considered in line with Local Authority procedures.
Severe Absence	Below 50%	Intensive support and involvement of Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate.