



# Ribblesdale School

## Attendance and Absence Procedures

(Including children with health needs who cannot attend school).

### Context

Ribblesdale High School recognises that pupils will only benefit fully from their education if they attend school regularly and on time. Attendance will be maximised through an effective partnership between pupils, their parents/carers and the school.

### Aims

The school will:

- Offer an environment for pupils in which they feel valued and safe.
- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Encourage parents/carers to play an active role in resolving attendance issues.
- Set targets for improvement to improve the attendance of the whole school and key target groups (e.g. persistent absentees).

### Procedures

#### Informing the school of absence

Parents/carers are to inform school on the first day of their child's absence no later than 9.30am. Parents/carers are then encouraged to contact school every other day throughout their child's absence. Failure to inform the school will result in the Attendance Manager endeavouring to contact parents/carers but a lack of response could ultimately lead to an unauthorised absence.

#### Registration

Registers are taken by the relevant Form Tutor at 8.50am for the morning session and no later than 1.10pm for the afternoon session. On Fridays the timing of the afternoon registration is an hour earlier as a result of the shortened school day. Pupils who arrive after

these times should be marked as late by the Form Tutor or in the afternoons by the subject teacher. Pupils who arrive after the registration period has finished in the morning should report to Student Services to be marked late and receive a slip which they should present to their teacher on arrival at their lesson. Pupils who arrive after the register has closed (9.30am) will be marked as unauthorised unless a valid reason can be provided and substantiated e.g. a late school bus.

### **Appointments and illness**

Any pupil who needs to leave the school premises during school hours for any reason must sign out at Student Services and present a note or appointment card. Pupils who feel ill or having sustained an injury during school hours must report to Student Services where they will be assessed and if necessary parents/carers will be contacted in order that provision can be made for collection by a parent/carer. Pupils **cannot** be sent home without collection as this may jeopardise their health and safety.

### **Pupil 's who cannot attend school due to health needs and medical reasons and Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA).**

School will always work in collaboration with our parents/carers when it comes to supporting pupils who are experiencing ongoing health issues. Evidence must be provided by a consultant which specifically outlines the condition that has led to the pupils being unfit to attend school at that time. As a school we will implement guidance set out by medical professionals and where suggested seek respite for pupils who might benefit from a placement in a medical unit. This includes mental health issues that a pupil may experience within school. Support from the Pastoral Team, School Counsellor and external agencies will be coordinated to ensure that pupils can access as much of the curriculum as possible and make the best possible progress in their learning. Please refer to our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy for further information how pupils with specific needs are supported in school.

### **Promoting Good Attendance / Punctuality**

A regular cycle of activities will take place to promote good attendance/punctuality e.g. assemblies, targeted assemblies, one to one discussions, mentoring with pupils and meetings with parents. A penalty notice can be issued and where pupils are regularly late to school, both parents are liable to a fine.

### **Monitoring Attendance and Interventions**

Attendance data will be generated, analysed and actioned in order to ensure that effective intervention strategies are implemented as a matter of routine. Year Leaders / Form Tutors will be provided with regular updates to monitor patterns of attendance.

Regular liaison must occur in school with key members of staff including SLT links, Year Leaders, Pastoral Coordinators and the Attendance Manager to discuss and implement strategies for dealing with poor attendance/punctuality.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Where absence is occurring which has not been agreed by the school this will be marked as unauthorised.

Definitions of unauthorised absence are:

- Truancy (including internal truancy)
- Parentally condoned absence without good reason
- Holidays in term time
- Arrival after the register has closed.

Where an unauthorised absence has been recorded the Attendance Manager will write to parents informing them that this has happened and highlighting that further unauthorised absence could result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

In the case of a pattern of unauthorised absence developing, a face to face meeting will be held with parents to inform them of the possible consequences and to engage the family in supporting the pupil in resolving any difficulties. If parents fail to attend the meeting this would provide further evidence of lack of engagement and would not in any way hinder the process of referring the case to the Local Authority Court Officer.

Pupils who obtain more than 10 unauthorised absences (the equivalent of 5 full school days) in any term or 20 unauthorised absences (the equivalent of 10 full school days) over two consecutive terms may be subject to a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is designed to be an early intervention. A Penalty Notice will only be applied if the progress being made either by the pupil or their parents/carers is deemed unsatisfactory. Both parents/carers are liable to a fine even if parents are divorced or separated. Further details are available from school or Lancashire County Council (telephone number 01772 531263).

In cases where attendance is below 65% but includes unauthorised absence of more than 10 unauthorised absences in any term or 20 unauthorised absences over two consecutive terms a Penalty Notice would be deemed inappropriate and court proceedings may well be actively pursued leading to prosecution.

### **Holiday Absence Policy**

There is an established, proven link between good attendance and effective progress. Ribblesdale High School wants to encourage and develop all our pupils' learning throughout their school career and holiday absence in term time can seriously jeopardise pupil progress.

For this reason **pupils will not be given authorisation to take holiday leave except in exceptional circumstances**. It is very unlikely that requests for holidays or extended leave will be authorised but if parents want the school to consider such a request they must complete an application for holiday / extended leave form which is available on the school website at least one month before the relevant start date. Family work patterns or the financial implications of going on holiday in term time would not meet the criteria of exceptional circumstances. Parents will then receive a response informing them of the school's decision. If parents/carers still take their son/daughter out of school, then the

absence is deemed unauthorised and may incur a Penalty Notice (see above policy relating unauthorised absence). In cases where the school is not notified but holidays are taken in term time these will also be recorded as unauthorised and are also likely to incur a Penalty Notice.

### **Rewards**

A variety of rewards are given to pupils throughout the academic year to celebrate good attendance. A pupil's attendance also impacts on whether they are invited to attend the end of year rewards trip.

### **Alternative Provision**

As a result of specific medical needs or as a strategy to improve a pupil's behaviour, it may be necessary to direct a pupil to Alternative Provision. During this time, attendance is monitored in exactly the same way as if the pupils was accessing their education at Ribblesdale High School. Failure to attend Alternative Provision would lead to the same attendance procedures such as Fixed Penalty Notices and possible court action.

**Reviewed by SLT lead: Zaneta Dewhurst (Deputy Headteacher): Oct 2019**

**Approved by governors: May 2023**

**Next Review: May 2024**