



ATTENDANCE POLICY

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ROYAL GREENWICH TRUST SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Royal Greenwich Trust School strives to create an environment where students enjoy coming to school. It is important that all staff, parents and carers share the responsibility of encouraging good attendance. One of our basic principles is to celebrate success and good attendance is fundamental to successful attainment and achievement.

If a student is absent from school, it is not possible for the teacher to directly teach the student

“Perceptive teachers pick up the patterns of absence among individual students, and are alert to warning signs such as lateness, “feeling ill” at specific lessons, unhappiness about some elements of work, over-anxiety about deadlines or exams, and peer group difficulties. They are also aware of signs of physical and emotional stress, marked changes in personality, motivation, concentration and behaviour, they seek out opportunities to talk with these children and in some cases with their parents.”

Education Observed 13: Attendance in School DES 1989

It is known that there is a direct correlation between good attendance and achieving expected progress and examination results.

The school actively promotes good attendance for all students and recognises that regular and punctual attendance is both a legal requirement and essential for students to maximise their educational opportunities. Students out of school are at risk of becoming educationally and socially isolated and at risk of becoming involved in abuse or anti-social behaviour.

The governors, Headteacher and staff undertake to work in partnership with parents to promote full attendance at Royal Greenwich Trust School.

1. The Role of the School Staff

Staff will actively promote 100% attendance for our students, using a variety of rewards and sanctions. Staff will encourage students to consider absence without good reason as a serious breach of school rules. Staff will emphasise to students the importance of punctuality and reliability when they leave school and enter further education or the world of work.

All subject teachers suspicious about a student’s absence from school or an individual lesson will, in the first instance, inform the Attendance Officer who will follow up.

In line with Health and Safety requirements, a register is required for every lesson. It is a statutory responsibility of the teacher or class supervisor to ensure that the register is taken.

At Royal Greenwich Trust School the SIMS system is used. This system allows the statistics required by the Education Act to be collated electronically. The morning register will be taken at the start of P1 and students should be in school by 8.50 to ensure punctuality for a 9.00am start. The afternoon register will be taken at the start of P10.

Attendance staff will ensure attendance and lateness records are kept up to date and inform parents of any concerns.

In all cases of unjustified absence, careful consideration will be given to individual student's circumstances and discretion will be used when deciding upon action to be taken. However, the difference between a student coping with domestic difficulty and parentally condoned absences or lateness cannot be over-emphasised. Whilst we need to be aware of the domestic disadvantage in which some of our young people are placed, we are not helping them in the long term if we simply condone the absence.

The school will regularly update student information on SIMS once parents have passed on any changes.

Royal Greenwich Trust School sees the importance of celebrating success and that includes rewarding students who continually maintain good attendance or demonstrate improvement.

- Attendance certificates for 100% attendance will be issued each term.
- There will be attendance awards organised by the Head of Year at the end of year for the students with the best attendance records as well as certificates and prizes for 100%.
- In addition rewards will be issued to students at the end of each term for 100% attendance plus good behaviour record.
- The student's attendance will be included on the student's report issued in term one to five. A full attendance record will be given to parents/carers at the end of the academic year.
- Students with improved attendance (where appropriate) will receive letters of commendation via their parents/carers from their Form Tutor, Head of Year or Attendance Officer.
- Students may be referred to Heads of Year for commendation of efforts made towards improvement as well as for full attendance.

The school accepts that some students and parents need support in maintaining good attendance, thus the school adopts the following strategies to ensure at least 95% attendance is maintained:

- A regular meeting takes place between the Attendance Officer and Head of Year to monitor students who raise cause for concern.

- Meetings with parents and/or students will take place to discuss serious cases.
- Attendance-related matters are included in the induction for all new staff.
- Liaison with the Heads of Year / Department and Form Tutors will take place to devise flexible and innovative responses to those who find it difficult to attend regularly for whatever reason.
- Attainment goals for individuals or tutor groups may be used to promote good attendance.
- Welcoming children back after illness.
- Taking specific measures to ease children back into school after protracted illness.

Students will be encouraged to consider absence without good reason as a serious breach of school rules and will be informed it will be recorded as truancy. The Attendance Officer will inform parents/carers of truancy as soon as possible.

Heads of Faculty, in conjunction with the Heads of Year, will work with the class teachers to devise effective methods of ensuring students make up the time and work missed.

Persistent lateness may result in a meeting with the Head of Year and parents/carers.

Students who truant or whose attendance is above 85% but below 95% will be monitored by the Heads of Year to help ensure excellent attendance is restored (95%+).

Students who truant or whose attendance persistently falls below 85% will be referred or discussed with the Education Welfare Service. Students who are referred to the EWO must be closely monitored by the Attendance Officer.

2. The Role of Parents and Carers

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time and is in a fit condition to learn. Parents/carers are expected to ensure that their child understands that absence without good reason, be it from school or a lesson, is a serious breach of school rules and creates a serious health and safety risk.

The school publishes the dates of school terms at least one year in advance to assist parents/carers in planning school holidays and the school's website outlines key events and dates in its calendar.

Amendments to the 2006 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations removes references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time.

Holidays taken in term time without permission mean that the student's absence will be unauthorised and will result in a penalty notice being issued.

Parents are reminded that:

- It is a parent's/carer's responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.
- Parents/carers are required to inform the school of any changes to addresses, contact details and name changes.

Royal Greenwich Trust School will actively work with parents/carers where they fail to ensure that their child attends and stays in school.

The school's Attendance Officer will inform parents/carers of truancy as soon as possible.

The school will authorise absence from school under the following circumstances:

- when prevented by sickness
- work experience, interviews, educated off site, approved sporting activity, educational visit or trip
- any unavoidable cause
- days exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a student's parents belong
- when transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance
- participation in approved public performance
- exceptional leave which is authorised by the Headteacher
- bereavement

Absence notes sent in by the parent or carer will be signed and dated by the tutor and passed to the Attendance Officer. Tutors who suspect a forgery will discuss this with the Attendance Officer or Head of Year who will contact home.

Parents/carers who fail to ensure their child attends school at a level of 85% or more will be referred to the Local Education Authority. The school will closely monitor these students in school to support the parent/carer and student.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA officers, Headteachers and the police to issue penalty notices in case of unauthorised absences from school.

Penalty notices came into force on 27th February 2004 and it has been agreed, following consultation on the Code of Conduct (Appendix 2), that notices will be issued by the Local Education Authority based on requests from schools and the police.

Penalty notices may be issued in the following circumstances:

- overt truancy (including students caught on truancy sweeps)
- parentally-condoned absences
- holidays in term time
- excessive delayed return from extended holidays within prior school agreement
- persistent late arrival in school (after the register has closed)

Payment of a penalty notice within 21 days is £60 per parent/carer. Payment after this time but within 28 days is £120 per parent/carer. The LEA retains any revenue from penalty notices. Non-payment of a penalty notice will result in the withdrawal of the notice and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process.

APPENDIX 1

INFORMATION TO STAFF

1. Registration

In line with health and safety requirements a register is required for every lesson. This should be taken as soon as possible within the planned lesson but within the first 15 minutes.

Students who arrive during normal lesson time, but after registration report, should be registered by the class teacher who should mark the student as late so they are recorded as late rather than absent. A tag on the register should indicate the number of minutes late.

It is absolutely essential that the a.m. and p.m. registers are taken. If SIMS fails to work a manual list must be sent to the Attendance Officer.

Teaching staff should only use the following codes: / present, A present but not in correct uniform, /K present but without PE Kit and N not present, L for late should be used for students who arrive after you have taken the register and recorded N. All other codes will be entered by attendance staff.

Under no circumstances must codes be altered UNLESS the student is in your lesson.

All problems with entering registers on SIMS must be reported to the Attendance Officer in the first instance.

If you are having problems entering on SIMS, please send a paper register to the Attendance Officer.

Staff failing to complete registration marks correctly will receive a memo requesting a written explanation. This will be followed up by the Deputy Headteacher.

If a student 'appears' in your lesson who is not on your register you must refer the situation to the Head of Faculty or student reception to contact the Head of Year to resolve the situation. The only exceptions are:

- A new student who will have a note from the Head of Year.
- A student who has been sent to you as part of the agreed time-out behaviour management provision organised by the Head of Faculty

All adjustments to registers/class lists MUST be sanctioned by HoF/HoY and referred to a Deputy Headteacher before a student changes class/set.

2. Morning Registration Procedure

The P1 register must be taken by 9.10 am so that it can be added to the fire register.

If the P1 register is not taken by 9.10 am an email will be sent to the class teacher for urgent action. If the register is then taken – no further action

If the SIMS register is not taken – a paper register will be sent to the class to ensure students are present.

Fire register can then be completed.

3. PM Registration

The P5 register must be taken by 2.00pm if the P5 register is not taken by 2.00pm an email will be sent to the class teacher for urgent action.

4. Periods 1-6

Subject teachers must take a register at the start of each lesson.

- Notes or telephone calls received by the office are passed to Form Tutors via the Attendance Officer – who will pre-record a lesson absence in advance e.g. Doctors appointment.
- Any notes received about attendance by Form Tutors must be passed to the Attendance Officer.
- The Attendance Officer will enter the appropriate code for all absence.

This system ensures the health and safety of our students and allows the statistics required by the Education Act to be collated correctly. Therefore it is essential that staff ensure that the SIMS system is used correctly as outlined above.

5. Action for staff for failure to take register

It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that the register is taken. If the register has not been completed by the end of the lesson an email will be sent to the HoF requesting follow up action for failure to complete register.

- If 3 registers are missed – Meeting with Head of Faculty
- If 6 registers are missed – Meeting with member of the Senior Leadership Team with line responsibility for the faculty concerned
- If 10 registers are missed – member of the Senior Leadership Team with line responsibility for the faculty concerned will start disciplinary action
- If 15 registers are missed – Meeting with Headteacher. Level 1 disciplinary action could be implemented

6. Monitoring Lateness:

The SIMS register must be taken during every lesson.

- Students who arrive during normal lesson time but after registration report, should be registered by the class teacher who should mark the students as late so they are recorded as late rather than absent. A tag on the register should indicate the number of minutes late.

Students arriving between 9.10 am and 9.30 am:

- STUDENT LOGGED AS LATE by class teacher. Attendance officer logs and tags students on SIMS with the number of minutes late.

Students arriving between 9.30am and 10.00am

- Staff on duty direct students to reception to sign in.
- STUDENT LOGGED AS LATE*. Staff on duty tag student on SIMS with minutes late
- Phone call home and detention set with HoY
- Follow up action will depend upon reason for lateness
- *If unauthorised marked as U

- *Student receives 5 'U' marks – late letter sent
- *Student receives 10 'U' marks – penalty notice sent.

Students arriving between 10.00am and 3.30 pm:

- Student must register at student office
- Student's name and reason logged
- Student referred to HoY for follow up action depending upon reason for lateness.

Lateness to lesson

- Teachers will monitor punctuality to lessons
- Lateness should be followed up by ensuring that students return at break or lunch time to catch up the missed work or by logging a behaviour incident.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE CODES

Please note: The only codes that should be used by teachers / teaching assistants are:

/	Present	Present
\	Present	Present
L	Present but late	Present
K	Present but not in correct uniform/kit	Present
N	Absent from lesson/College - reason not yet given	Absence Unauthorised
A	Uniform issues	Present

One of the above should be entered for every student **UNLESS** the attendance staff have pre-entered a code.

Other Absence Codes – only used by attendance staff

B	Educated off site i.e., hospital school, DFE offsite provision	Present
V	ALL educational visits/trips	Present
W	Work experience	Present
U	Arrived late after registration closed	Absence Unauthorised
O	Unauthorised circumstances, i.e. truanting	Absence Unauthorised
C	Other authorised circumstances	Absence Authorised
E	Excluded	Absence Authorised
H	Holiday leave authorised by Principal	Absence Authorised
I	Illness – not medical or dental appointment	Absence Authorised
M	Medical/Dental/Hospital	Absence Authorised
P	Condoned sporting activity	Absence Authorised
R	Religious observation	Absence Authorised
X	Staff present only	
-	All should attend	
#	Holiday for all	
Y	Enforced closure	
Z	Not part of the College's year	
S	Study leave	
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	
G	Holiday unauthorised leave of absence	
J	Interview with prospective employer or other educational establishment	

Addresses, contact telephone numbers and parents' surnames must be regularly checked and updated. The School Office must be notified of any changes.

APPENDIX 2
PENALTY NOTICE
CODE OF CONDUCT AND SAMPLE LETTERS
Royal Borough of Greenwich

1. Introduction

- Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA officers, Headteachers (& Deputy and Assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from School.
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004.
- The issuing of penalty notices must conform with all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all equal opportunities legislation.
- The LEA has the prime responsibility for developing the code of conduct within which all partners named in the act will operate

2. Rationale:

- Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for students to maximise their educational opportunities.
- In law an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure a child's attendance at a school at which they are a registered student and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Sec 444, Education Act 1996 or Sec 36, the Children's Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate.
- The Attendance Service discharge the responsibility for taking legal action against parents/carers on behalf of the LEA.
- Parents/carers and students are supported at school and LEA level to overcome barriers to regular attendance through a range of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any nature are for use only where parental co-operation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem.
- Sanctions are used as a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure improvement.

3. Circumstances where a penalty notice may be issued:

- A penalty notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- In cases where families contain more than one poor-attending student multiple issue may occur but this will be the subject of careful consideration and co-ordination.
- There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a penalty notice.

The issuing of a penalty notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- overt truancy (including students caught on truancy sweeps)
- parentally-condoned absences
- holidays in term-time
- persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).

To ensure consistent delivery of penalty notices the following criteria will apply:

- at least 10 sessions (5 School days) lost to unauthorised absence by the student during the current term.
- other than in specific circumstances* the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement.
 - The deliberate taking of a holiday in term time without / against school permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.

Schools must consider every aspect of a student's case before considering whether a penalty notice would be appropriate. This must include strategic discussions with the assigned EWO and any other attendance-support staff who have involvement with or knowledge of the student/family.

4. Procedure for issuing penalty notices:

Following consultation it was agreed that:

- Penalty notice can only be issued by the Headteacher or someone authorised by them (Deputy or Assistant Headteacher, LEA or Police).
- The attendance service will issue all penalty notices. This will ensure consistent and equitable delivery, help to maintain good school-home relationships and ensure that there is not conflict with other enforcement sanctions.
- Penalty notices will only be issued by post and never as an on the spot action; this to satisfy that all evidential requirements are in place and to meet health and safety

requirements.

The attendance service will receive requests to issue penalty notices from schools, the Police and neighbouring LEAs. These requests will be actioned provided that:

- all relevant information is supplied in the specified manner
- the circumstances of the student's absence meets all the requirements of this code of conduct
- the issue of a penalty notice does not conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other enforcement sanctions already being processed.

The attendance service will respond to all requests within 10 school days of receipt and where all criteria are met will:

- issue a formal written warning to the parent/carer of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued.
- In the same letter set a period of 15 school days within which the student must have no unauthorised absence.
- Issue a penalty notice through the post at the end of a 15-day period if the required level of improvement has not been achieved

5. Procedure for withdrawing penalty notices:

- proof has been established that the penalty notice was issued to the wrong person
- the use of the penalty notice did not conform to the terms of this code of conduct

6. Payment of penalty notices:

- Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the penalty notice.
- Payment of a penalty notice discharges the parent's/carer's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the penalty notice.
- Payment of a penalty notice within 21 days is £60 and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120.
- The LEA retains any revenue from penalty notices to cover enforcement costs (collection or prosecuting in the event of non-payment).
- There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

7. Non-payment of penalty notices:

- Non-payment of a penalty notice will result in the withdrawal of the notice and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of Sec 444, 1996

Education Act.

8. Policy & Publicity

- Deployment of penalty notices as a sanction is included in the authority's attendance policy.
- All school attendance policies will include information on the deployment of penalty notices and this will be brought to the attention of all parents/carers.
- The LEA will publicise the introduction of penalty notices through the local media and through information to parents/carers.

9. Reporting & Review:

The head of attendance service will report annually to Principal Forums and Police on the deployment and outcomes of penalty notices.

Reports to the Policy Overview Committee on attendance will include analysis of the use of penalty notices as well as other enforcement strategies.