

RICHARD TAYLOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

P51a Policy for Attendance

OUR VISION STATEMENT

At Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School

‘Our vision is to teach every child the wisdom, knowledge and skills to be creative lifelong learners enabling them to shape their future.

We achieve academic excellence by delivering a curriculum, rich in experiences, which stimulates and challenges all learners.

Our Christian faith and values are the living heart of a community where everyone’s contribution is respected. Our school is a place where all know that they are safe and loved as children of God.

We are a transformational community with a thriving culture of learning; celebrating success and inspiring children to achieve their goals.

We give children a voice and an opportunity to use it to make a difference in their school, community and world

We create confident, resilient, happy and successful learners prepared for the next stage of their journey.’

Statement of Intent

Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School is committed to achieving the best academic outcomes for all our pupils.

Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

We recognise the vital role that attendance plays in supporting the mental health of young people. All staff have a fundamental role in identifying children who require additional wellbeing support which begins with ensuring high levels of attendance.

We celebrate success in all its forms at every opportunity and create a learning environment where children want to come to school. Good attendance and punctuality are a key element in ensuring children achieve their goals.

The Governors, Head Teacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School.

We will always strive to achieve attendance in the highest quartile nationally and set the aspirational target of 97% attendance for every child.

Rewarding Attendance

The school does not support a policy of automatically rewarding 100% attendance. Whilst we fully recognise the importance of school attendance, we acknowledge the importance of understanding that there are often valid reasons why a child is not in school, these include:

- Common contagious childhood illnesses, including vomiting, which require a period of absence from school.
- Hospital Appointments
- Long-term medical conditions.

We believe that no child should be made to feel that they have failed to achieve because of an illness which requires a period of rest, treatment and recovery. We do not wish to place undue pressure on parents to send their child to school when they are not well enough to be active and successful learners and risk passing on their illness to other children.

Where the school feels that a carefully planned reward programme will support the improved attendance of a child whose absence is not linked to illness a scheme of rewards will be introduced in partnership between the family and school for the period of time required to raise levels of attendance.

Safeguarding and Inclusion

At Richard Taylor School our number one priority will always be the safeguarding of our pupils through prevention, protection and support. Good attendance is a crucial factor in keeping children safe.

We are committed to being an inclusive place of learning and will make all reasonable adjustments necessary in line with the 2010 Equality Act to ensure all children have access to a full and enriching education.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.

Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent to ensure that school knows that the child is safe.

If a child is absent and the parent has not contacted the school then, as part of our safeguarding policy, the school will call the child's home to ascertain the reason for absence. This will be completed by 11am.

Pupils are expected to arrive between 8:50am and 9am.

The classroom doors will be open at 8.50am; in the event of poor weather conditions doors will open at 8.45am

All pupils who arrive late must report, with their parent or carer, to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded. Children arriving after 9.10am are marked in the register with a 'late mark'.

Parents or carers are asked to contact the school if they are experiencing difficulties getting their child to school. The school will always work in partnership with families to ensure we support a child's arrival at school.

Illness and Medical Appointments

When a child is unwell, parents are expected to contact the school before 8.45am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for a medical appointment, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

If a child is absent due to an upset stomach then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.

The Role of the School Staff

The head teacher has overall responsibility for attendance and has to report termly percentages to the Local Governing Body.

The head teacher monitors attendance together with the admin staff team.

Class teachers complete an e-register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. The admin staff will mark in children who arrive after classroom doors are closed. They will telephone the parents of any absent children if they have not already made contact.

It is the responsibility of office administrators to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)
- Two contact numbers are obtained for all pupils.

Lateness

At Richard Taylor Church of England School, the register is taken at 09.00. Afternoon registers are taken at 13.00

Pupils arriving after these times must report to the school office where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded.

Leave of Absence

From September 2013 the Department for Education have amended the Pupil Registration Regulations, removing the head teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation, a letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Oversleeping
- Confusion over school dates
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays

When an application is made for authorised absence, the Headteacher will give due consideration to the circumstances and the child's past attendance history.

Monitoring Attendance and Lateness

The school closely monitors attendance and lateness to try to minimize poor attendance and punctuality by

- Staff speaking to parents and carers as and when concerns arise

- The Inclusion Lead or Headteacher contacting families whose attendance is below average to try to find ways to support improved attendance.
- The Headteacher writing to parents when attendance or punctuality does not improve.

The Headteacher will present a detailed attendance report to the Local Governing Body as part of his Headteacher Report on a termly basis. This will highlight the attendance of all identified groups.

Persistent Absence

The threshold for 'persistent absence' is 10%. A child will be considered as persistently absent using the following criteria:

Term Number of sessions missed since the start of the year (a session is half a day)

Term	Sessions Missed
Autumn One	7 or more
Autumn Two	14 or more
Spring One	20 or more
Spring Two	25 or more
Summer One	31 or more
Summer Two	38 or more

Support from the school

The school understands that from time to time situations may arise which make it difficult for parents to ensure their child is in school. For example

- Housing issues
- Health issues
- Children's behavioural issues

Where there are concerns about attendance we will contact parents as soon as these arise:

- By telephone call or letter to raise the concern
- Followed up by a meeting with the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team if there is no improvement.

Further Actions

When there are concerns about a child's attendance and it does not appear to be improving, the school will refer to the local authority early help service who may consider the following steps to support the family improve attendance:

- Home visits
- multi agency meetings
- Sign posting to supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Early Help, Prevent Team.

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance

- Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct.
- The Attendance Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Children Missing Education

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Local Authority. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed. If a child has been absent from school for 2 weeks with no reason given, or if they have moved and no new school has contacted Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School a formal referral will be made to the Child Missing from Education team.

COVID-19 Update January 2022

In the event of any child being required to self-isolate due to a positive case of COVID-19 the class teacher or teaching assistant will contact the family on day one of their absence to ensure the child's wellbeing and to confirm the arrangements for accessing online learning.

Children will only be expected to access online learning if they are well enough to learn.

In some cases, children will be required to self-isolate prior to hospital visits. If this is the case they will receive online support in the same way.

This Policy will be reviewed every three years

Reviewed 2021-2022

Review 2024-2025