

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS & PROCESSES

Legal position: Every child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student of a school, must attend the school regularly.

Children need to attend regularly if they are to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and in some cases it can result in children being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Reigate School believes that regular attendance at school is vital for children to be successful.

Regular Attendance

Children are expected to attend 100% of the time, be punctual every day and show good behaviour in lessons. This will be rewarded in line with the School's reward system.

Absence

There are certain circumstances where a child may not attend school and absence may be authorised by the Headteacher/Head of School or other designated members of staff:

- a) sickness covered by medical evidence;
- b) with the permission of the Headteacher/Head of School or designated staff;
- c) to take part in a day of religious observance by the persuasion to which the parents belong;
- d) parents can apply for exceptional leave of absence for sporting or other educational activities and these will be considered by the Headteacher/Head of School. If approved, these can be coded as authorised absences or approved sporting activities. Parents need to complete the Leave of Absence form and return it to the school for consideration.

Absence Due to Illness/Medical Appointments

Parents are discouraged from keeping children off school for minor ailments and to limit time off for visits to doctors or dentists as far as is reasonably practicable. Where this is unavoidable, please notify the school in advance.

On the first morning of the child's absence, the school should be contacted by telephone on the Absence Line: 01737 245241. This is an automated 24-hour system. A message giving the child's name, tutor group and reason for absence should be left.

If your child fails to register or is absent and we have not received any notification by 9.30am, an automated message will be sent to you. We may also send a text message to inform you of your child's absence.

Where a child is absent without any prior authorisation an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming (for whatever reason) the absence must be treated as unauthorised.

The school reserves the right to request medical evidence in cases of prolonged absence.

Where a child is likely to be absent from school due to long term illness or treatment, the School will support the student by setting work and making a referral to Access to Education.

Explanations such as birthdays, minding the house, shopping trips within school hours are not acceptable reasons for absence.

Leave of Absence

It is highly unlikely that the Headteacher will grant permission for a leave of absence during term time. These can only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances. The Regulations are that from 1st September 2013, leave of absence shall not be granted unless (i) an application has been made in advance to the Head teacher by a parent with whom the student normally resides, and (ii) the Head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to "exceptional circumstances" relating to that application. Any leave of absence of 5 or more days taken during examination periods or term time may lead to parents being subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice. These are under the jurisdiction of the Inclusion Service, and may be issued by the Inclusion Officer if they believe the absence is not an exceptional circumstance and will impact your child's learning.

The 2007 Regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. From 1st September 2013, parents must pay £60 per parent per child within 21 days, or £120 per parent per child within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Irregular Attendance

At Reigate School we monitor attendance data in order to identify irregular attendance patterns. If a child's attendance is irregular or a pattern is discovered, the School will inform parents and carers in writing. On occasion, it may be necessary for parents and carers to attend a meeting in school to discuss attendance concerns. If students do not attend school regularly, the Inclusion Service will be asked to contact the parents to ascertain what action, if any, needs to be taken. This will be done in consultation with the Attendance Manager, Deputy Head and Head of Year. If necessary, the School Medical Officer will be involved.

Persistent Absence

Schools are required to record when a child is persistently absent and the way this is measured has changed. At Reigate School persistent absence is monitored closely and parents will be contacted if their child is likely to become persistently absent. The updated Government guidelines on persistent absence are as follows:

Persistent Absentee Thresholds - Schools

From the beginning of the academic year, 2015 to 2016, the government has reduced the persistent absence threshold from 15 per cent to 10 per cent.

The following table shows estimated cumulative absent sessions thresholds for around 15 per cent and 10 per cent:

	15 per cent	10 per cent
Half-term 1	10 or more sessions	7 or more sessions
Half-term 1-2 (autumn term)	22 or more sessions	14 or more sessions
Half-term 1-3	30 or more sessions	20 or more sessions
Half-term 1-4 (autumn term and spring term combined)	38 or more sessions	25 or more sessions
Half-term 1-5	46 or more sessions	31 or more sessions
Half-term 1-6 (full academic year)	56 or more sessions	38 or more sessions

NB: There are two sessions per school day (AM and PM)

Registering Students

Registration will take place at the start of each session (am and pm) and in each individual lesson. Staff with concerns about attendance will refer these to the Head of Year and/or the Attendance Manager.

Deleting Students from the Admissions Register

As of 1st September 2013, a school will be able to delete a child's name from the Admissions Register, where a student is granted leave of absence and the criteria (i) to (iii) below are satisfied:

- (i) The child failed to return to school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period of leave granted;
- (ii) The Head teacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe the child is unable to attend by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause;
- (iii) Both the school and the LEA have failed after reasonable enquiry to ascertain where the child is.

Punctuality

Children should also be punctual to school and individual lessons. Registration is at 8.45am. Children arriving after this will be marked as late. If children arrive between 8.50am and 9.05am and the tutor group is in assembly, they must sign in at Student Services. Children who arrive after 9.05am must sign in at Student Services and they will be marked late for the session. Children who arrive after 9.30am will be marked as absent for the session. Sanctions may be imposed on children who are persistently late to school or lessons. Telephone calls and/or text messages may well be sent to parents of those who are late and they may be referred to the Inclusion Officer. Parents and carers of children who are persistently late after the close of register may be issued with a penalty notice (fine) by the Inclusion Service. Parents must pay £60 per parent per child within 21 days, or £120 per parent per child within 28 days. If a child is late on more than three occasions or arrives at school after 9.30am, the School may inform parents and carers in writing.

Illness (In School)

If a child becomes ill during the school day, she or he must ask for permission to go to the school medical room and, if necessary, parents will be contacted for the child to go home. Children must never contact parents directly to make arrangements to go home. If it is necessary to send a student to hospital, we will use East Surrey Hospital, Redhill.

Truancy

If a child truants from school or leaves school without permission, this is regarded as an extremely serious matter. It may take up a great deal of staff time and it may be necessary to inform the police that a child is missing. This is a matter both of discipline and personal safety.

Under no circumstances should children leave school without permission from a member of staff.

Heads of Year will report every act of truancy to parents and carers and any child found truanting will be liable to School sanctions such as detentions.

Sanctions

Twenty four hours' notice will be given to parents of any detention after school unless parents agree to an alternative arrangement with the School. Detentions will not exceed one hour. These may be given after school or during lunchtime or break times. Children may also be required to make up any work they have missed. Internal exclusion or isolation may also be a further consequence of truanting.

This Policy is due for review in March 2021.