



REIGATE ST MARY'S
PREPARATORY AND CHOIR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy including EYFS

Policy Author:

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Date Reviewed by Author:

16 August 2024

Next Review Date:

1 September 2025

1. Introduction

At Reigate St Marys we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards school attendance and for all pupils at the school to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential. We fulfil our commitment by:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building and maintaining strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support needed to attend school

2. The School Day

The school opens at 07.30am for Breakfast Club for those wishing to attend. The main school gates open at **08.00am**, extended day finishes at **6.00pm**. Pupils must be at school **by 8.25am at the latest** and normal lessons finish at 3.30pm for Lower School, 3.50pm for Years 3 & 4 and 4pm for Years 5 & 6. No pupils should be on school premises outside these hours or during school holidays unless engaged in a school activity, a holiday club/wraparound care or supervised by a member of staff.

Wraparound Care for Green Shoots – Year 6

Breakfast club begins at 07.30am and this is bookable via the Schools Buddy app.

Extended Day begins at 3.30pm in the Kindergarten block for Green Shoots – Year 2, and in an Upper school classroom for Years 3-6, and is bookable via the Schools Buddy app. Children from Lower School with Key Stage 2 siblings attend sibling waiting 3.30pm – 4pm then join extended day at 4pm. Extended Day is bookable in half hour slots and tea is served in the dining room between 5-5.30pm for all years.

All pupils must be collected by 6.00pm. If a parent is delayed for any reason they should contact the School Office by 5.30pm to let us know.

Green Shoots and Kindergarten

The school day for Green Shoots and Kindergarten is broken down into sessions. The core session is 8.25- 12.00, however, the lunch time session, 12.00-1.00pm and afternoon 1.00pm- 3.30pm may be added on. At the end of every term parents select which sessions over and above the school's minimum requirement their child will attend the following term. When a child is not attending one of their selected sessions the absence is recorded as a non-compulsory school age absence.

3. Recording Attendance

3.1 Attendance Register

An attendance register is kept on our Management Information System (iSAMs) and all enrolled pupils are on this register. The register is taken at the start of every school day and once after lunchtime. It will mark via codes whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Non-compulsory school age absence

Also recorded (sometimes in the comments section):

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The attendance register is kept for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

3.2 Registration

All pupils are required by law to register each morning, and this is carried out by Form Tutors at 8.25am. All pupils are also formally registered every afternoon.

National government codes are used to record attendance and absence. A copy of these codes is provided in *Appendix 1*.

Any pupil arriving after the register has been taken but before the end of the registration period will be entered as Late (L). Students who are missing from Morning Registration without a valid reason are registered by their Form Teacher with an N (Reason Not Yet Provided for absence) which is updated with a more appropriate code if the reason for absence has been established. Pupils in Green Shoots and Kindergarten who are not due for their session are marked as non-compulsory school absence (X).

All pupils leaving school because of illness, doctor's appointments or other approved absences are required to sign out at the School Office and sign in again on their return. Any pupil arriving late to school, i.e. after 8.25am, must also sign in at the School Office on their arrival.

After the registration period has closed, the School Office will run a report to show any pupils with an unexplained absence. The School Office will then ring/email the pupil's parents to find out where the pupil is and to ensure their safety.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Whenever a pupil is absent from school and their parents have not informed the school, we will contact the parent/s to ascertain the reason for absence. If we cannot get hold of either parent, we have two emergency contacts on file for each child and will contact them. If no contact is made with either parent or emergency contact, we will mark the absence as an unauthorised until we have received a satisfactory explanation.

3.3 Planned absence

If a pupil is unable to come to school through physical or mental illness, parents should email or telephone the school office by 8.25am on *each morning of absence* explaining the reason for absence.

If a pupil is unwell during the school day, they should report to the School Office to be assessed by our medical officer. If necessary, the School Office will contact the parent to discuss the problem.

If a pupil is absent due to sickness and/or diarrhoea then they must remain away from school for 48 hours following their last episode.

If a child has a serious medical condition (for example one of the following, although this is not an exhaustive list: a severe allergy, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, depression), has recently been in contact with or had diagnosed any contagious condition or has had major surgery, it is essential that parents inform the school immediately, so that we may take any necessary steps to ensure the welfare of the child whilst on school premises or involved in school activities. We may ask for parental assistance in writing a care plan and risk assessment including any recommendations from the health professionals involved with caring for the child.

If absence is required for routine appointments, please email the school office. On the day in question parents should pick their child up from the school office and return them to the school office to be signed in.

4. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

4.1 Approval for term time absence

Term dates are published at least a year in advance and may be found on the school website. The school offers long holidays, and a fortnight's half term in October. We therefore ask that children **are not** taken out of school during term time. The Headteacher and Head of Lower School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher/Head of Lower School's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

For exceptional circumstances any prolonged absence requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher if the child is in Upper School and Head of Lower School for children in the Lower School for

permission and can be sent to the school office via email office@reigatestmarys.org the request should be made at least 1 week before the absence.

For those children in Green Shoots and Kindergarten parents are still required to request an authorised absence if taking their child out of school during term time, this should be made in writing to the Head of Lower School.

5. Attendance monitoring

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data through registration reports generated by the Data Manager. These reports are analysed to identify pupils with a higher-than-average absence rate and helps spot any patterns. The school can then identify pupils that may require support with their attendance.

5.1 Monitoring attendance

The school monitors attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level. The school then identifies whether there are any children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

5.2 Analysing attendance

The school analyses attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance. The pastoral team uses this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

6. Concerns around absence or lateness

Where we have any concerns around patterns of absence, we will invite the parents of the pupil to discuss with a member of the pastoral team what the cause might be. It is important that the school can work with parents to help resolve any health worries or indeed other concerns that may be causing a pupil to not attend school. There is a range of support that we can put in place at school, such as extra help with academic work, counselling, mentoring, or indeed a referral to an outside agency.

Parents of pupils who are consistently late during a half term will be contacted by the school and parents will be invited in to discuss how to resolve any issues there may be.

We reserve the right to challenge parents' statements about a pupil absence and to seek additional evidence if we have concerns. This evidence could include the following as examples: a conversation between a member of our pastoral team with the health professional caring for the pupil, confirmation of an appointment from the surgery attended by the pupil, a note or email from a doctor or other healthcare professional.

7. Inspections

The school will periodically be subject to inspections from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and part of this inspection will be the scrutiny of our attendance registers. The School will need to provide access to our registers. Please note that the inspectors are bound by confidentiality and legislation not to share information inappropriately.

iSAMS is backed up regularly and the register backups are stored securely and are open to inspection for three years.

8. UK Border Agency

When visas are issued to students to study at a school in the UK, there is an expectation that the student will attend that school when it is in session. We have a responsibility to inform the UK Border Agency of periods of extended or unexplained absence from school. We must comply with any request for information from the Border Agency on a pupil's attendance.

9. Safeguarding

We are required to inform the local authority of any pupil who is absent for more than 10 days without good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised). We must also inform the local authority of pupils with patterns of unauthorised absence.

10. Deletions from the Attendance Register

Pupils may not be deleted from the attendance register until they have been deleted from the Admissions Register. Pupils may be deleted from the admissions register according to the grounds set out in *Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance 2016*¹. We have a duty to inform Surrey County Council of pupils who join and leave our school at both transition and non-transition times.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

11. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix I – RSM Registration Codes

N	No Reason Yet Provided for Absence
O	Unauthorised Absence
R	Religious Observation
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)
E	Excluded
V	Educational Visit or Trip
I	Illness
P	Approved Sporting Activity
M	Medical/Dental Appointment
J	Interview
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)
B	Educated Off Site
X	Non-Compulsory School Age Absence
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
Y	Enforced Closure
#	School Closed to Pupils