



REIGATE ST MARY'S
PREPARATORY AND CHOIR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy including EYFS

Policy Author:

Andrea Gower, Assistant Head Pastoral (SAC)
Sam Selkirk, Head of Lower School (SAC)

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Next Review Date:

15 August 2025

Aims

At Reigate St Marys we aspire to high levels of attendance from all pupils and are committed to meeting our obligation for all pupils at the School to reach their full educational potential.

We fulfil our commitment by:

- Developing and maintaining a whole School culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- To prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality, reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence;
- To ensure, as far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- To recognise the linkages between attendance/absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole School approach to safeguarding;
- Building and maintaining strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support needed to attend School; and
- Help promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

In recognising the importance of attendance, the school has appointed Mrs Andrea Gower, Assistant Head Pastoral as the Upper School's Attendance Champion and Mrs Sam Selkirk, Head of Lower School as the Lower School's attendance Champion (**SAC**). The SAC's will have responsibility for ensuring that this policy is kept up to date and compliant with the law and best practice. The SAC's along with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will analyse attendance and absence data and consistently look to improve the School's processes under this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

Regulatory Framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (DFE January 2024);
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010 and
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);
- [Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);
- [Guidance for Parents on school attendance](#) (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);
- ['Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) (NHS, April 2024);
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE, September 2024);
- [Children missing education](#) (DfE, August 2024);
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) (DfE, August 2017);

- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff](#) (DfE, February 2024);
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) (DfE, November 2018);
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#) (DfE, February 2023);
- [Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#) (DfE, February 2023);
- [Providing Remote education: guidance for schools](#) (DfE, updated August 2024); and
- [SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)].

The following School policies and procedures are relevant to this policy:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Non-collection of pupils Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions

Publication and availability

This policy is published on the School website and is sent to parents when pupils join the School. Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated. The policy is available in hard copy on request.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance, welfare and wellbeing of all pupil's at RSM are everyone's responsibility in the School. It starts with the Governors, the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the Attendance Champions who are on the SLT, the School Office, Data Manager but includes all school staff.

- The school will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.
- The school acknowledges that attendance is an essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the school community.
- Where there are challenges to attendance, the school will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.
- The school will respond to non-attendance and /or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the school's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data and ensure that intervention is regularly reviewed.
- The school will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level, form, year and other groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

Staff Responsibilities

The SAC's

- To set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;
- To establish and maintain effective procedures for tackling absence and make sure the procedures are followed by all staff;
- To regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- To have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and
- To communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.

Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance

The Form teachers, office and reception staff have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

- Have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- Record all absences promptly and accurately using the procedures specified;
- Seek explanations of absences required from parents;
- Make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with parents to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the school;
- Look for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;
- Deal with lateness consistently and promptly;
- Discuss non-attendance and/or lateness with pupils and parents and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance are given appropriate training.

Along with staff with specific responsibilities for attendance the school ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with parents about it.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an effective, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives their education. This means pupils must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. RSM will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short- and long-term consequences of poor attendance. Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

Reigate St Mary's expects all parents to:

- Make an application for authorised for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
- Notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and
- cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

Parents should ensure their child attends School by 08.25am for morning registration.

The scope of attendance

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. 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.

Compulsory school age refers to the legal obligation that a child attends school between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June the school year that they turn 16.

Additionally, pupils in Key Stage 2 will represent the school in sport fixtures and are expected to be available for fixtures which can take place after school or occasionally on Saturday mornings.

Pattern for School Holidays

The school term dates are published in advance and must be observed. Generally, the school year starts within 10 days of the August Bank Holiday; there are three weeks holiday at Christmas; three weeks at Easter; eight weeks in the summer, two weeks in October or November, one in February and one in May or June. The distribution of weeks varies from time to time according to factors beyond the School's jurisdiction. The holidays are designed to be generous enough to allow pupils to re-charge their batteries and to spend time with their families. We therefore ask that children **are not** taken out of school during term time.

The Admissions Register

In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 all new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the DSL without delay. They will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity if required. The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admissions or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and details of the school last attended. This register must be kept up to date, kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register made once a month in the form of a printed copy kept locked in the Operations Manager office (which is kept for six years after the end of the school year it relates to).

When there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

Schools have a statutory obligation to inform the Local Authority when a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the School's register on certain grounds such as: child removed to be home educated; the child is transferring to another local primary school; when the family has moved away or when the child has been permanently excluded. The School will also inform the Local Authority when it removes a pupil's name to the admissions register at non-standard transition points. The school will comply with any Local Authority requests for information on pupil movement at standard transition points.

Attendance Register

The School maintains an attendance register in accordance with [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\)](#)

[Regulations, 2006](#) and [CME guidance](#). These registers are kept electronically on the school's MIS system iSAMs and retained for 6 years.

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.

Any pupil arriving after the register has been taken but before the end of the registration period will be entered as Late (L) with the number of minutes they were late. 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 by the School Office. If a pupil arrives more than 30 minutes late without a valid reason the register will be recorded as absent for the AM session (Code U). 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.

Staff should record registration using the following codes:

/ Present AM	L Late inc. minutes (before reg closed)	X Non-compulsory school age absence
\ Present PM	M Medical/Dental appointment	B Attending any other approved educational activity
N No other reason yet provided for absence	O Unauthorised absence	Y1 Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
C Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	P Approved sporting activity	Y2 Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
CI Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance	Q Unable to attend due to access arrangements	Y3 Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
C2 Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	D Dual registration attendance	Y4 Unable to attend due to whole school being closed
R Religious observance	E Excluded	Y5 Unable to attend due to pupils in criminal detention
S Study Leave	G Annual Family Holiday (NOT AGREED)	Y6 Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law
T Pupil is a mobile child and travelling with their parent	I Illness	Y7 Unable to attend because of unavoidable causes
U Late after registers have closed	JI Unauthorised absence	V Educational visit
K Attending provision arranged by the LEA	W Work experience	# Planned Whole School Closure
Z Prospective pupil not on admission register		

The school office make daily checks of accuracy for the registers to ensure that there are no 'N's'.

Unplanned absence

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

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 absence is required for routine appointments, the school office should be emailed. 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.

For exceptional circumstances any prolonged absence requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher if the child is in Upper School and the 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. The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request. A leave of absence will usually be granted for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong.

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.

Additional Needs

RSM recognises that some pupils may find it harder than others to attend school, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to get the right support in place. The school will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance. RSM will work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Where a pupil has an EHCP the school will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls. Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, we will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Reporting Duties

The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attend and their absence is unauthorised. The School must notify the Local Authority monthly of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave (recorded with codes N, O and/or U) for more than 10 school days. The School will also notify the Local Authority annually of any pupils who have been recorded with code I (illness) and have missed 15 days consecutively or cumulatively in the school year because of illness.

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. The report also tracks any pupils who repeatedly arrive late to school so that the school can contact the parents to provide support in ensuring children arrive at school on time.

Monitoring attendance

The School works in partnership with pupils, parents and professionals. We strive for the highest levels of attendance from pupils to ensure that they have access to consistent teaching and pastoral support. However, we understand that there may be some circumstances when a pupil's attendance may be impacted, and we have a clear process to manage the oversight of attendance to ensure we provide targeted intervention, support and follow-up.

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/lateness may be a cause for concern. This is discussed with Form Teachers, the Pastoral team, the SENCO, SLT and Parents. Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more at the half-term mark the school will work in partnership with Parents and in some cases Professionals on a case-by-case basis.

The attendance percentage will be published on pupil's reports. In the Lower School this will be on the Spring Parents Evening Reports and the Summer Term Full Report. Upper School will be reported on the Spring Term Full Report and the Summer Term Parents Evening Report.

Analysing attendance

The school analyses weekly attendance and absence data to identify patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This analysis is used to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with parents and where applicable escalated to the SAC's. Frequent individual analysis is used to identify pupils who may need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for these cases.

We benchmark attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement. These reports are reported half-termly at Senior Leadership Meetings and where appropriate at Governor level.

Concerns around absence or lateness

Where we have any concerns around patterns of absence, we will invite the parents of the pupil to school 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.

Information Sharing

Personal information on attendance will only be shared with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- new pupil and deletion returns
- attendance returns
- sickness returns

The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These

officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

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 six years.

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's Data Retention Policy. The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

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.

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 from Education Statutory Guidance 2024. We have a duty to inform Surrey County Council of pupils who leave our school at both transition and non-transition time.