

# Attendance Policy

Approved by LGB

Approved on July 2019

SLT contact Headteacher

Revision due Every 2 years



RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST

## 1. Rationale

- a. The school seeks to ensure that all our students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.
- b. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
- c. All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.
- d. The school will establish an effective system of recognition which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping whilst challenging the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- e. To meet these objectives the school will use an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

## 2. Aims

- a. This policy aims:
  1. To improve the attendance and punctuality of students (in particular to maximise the number of students attending 96%+)
  2. To minimise the number of students who are “persistently absent”
  3. To ensure that students do not become “missing from education”
  4. To make attendance and punctuality priorities for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers (including supply), associate staff and governors
  5. To have clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks
  6. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
  7. To gather and analyse attendance data regularly
  8. To develop further positive and consistent communication between home and school
  9. To implement an effective system of recognition and sanctions that support the attendance policy
  10. To promote effective partnerships with external agencies with responsibility for school attendance within Brighton and Hove
  11. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

## 3. Implementation:

- a. Student absence
  1. Parents are asked to contact the school when their child is absent giving an indication of the problem and when they expect him/her to return.
  2. Reception staff enter the absence on the student’s register and Deputy Headteacher (DHT) and Heads of Year (HoYs) receive daily report of absences.
  3. Alternatively, if Tutors receive a note explaining an absence, they pass the details on to office staff.
  4. Any student unaccounted for by the end of Period One triggers a ‘Truancy Call’, the automated phone service that alerts parents to their child’s absence.
  5. Letters are generated at regular intervals alerting parents to any concerns with students’ attendance and asking parents to give reasons for any unaccounted absences. These are distributed by the office staff in consultation with the DHT.
  6. Unexplained or unauthorised absences of two or more days are referred to the DHT and contact home will be made if necessary to get further details.

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7. Those students identified as a cause for concern will be asked to provide medical evidence for any absences.
- b. Holidays
  1. The school makes it clear that term-time holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
  2. Parents and carers wanting to request a term time absence for holiday should write directly to the Headteacher, explaining their circumstances.
  3. If the Headteacher agrees that there are exceptional circumstances the absence will be authorised.
  4. Cases of unauthorised holidays being taken will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service for further action. School policy is to refer absences of more than 2.5 days across an academic year (either where they are taken in one case or cumulatively) for a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- c. Registers
  1. All registers are taken on Lesson Monitor.
  2. Teachers will take registers at the start of every lesson.
  3. AM registers close at 9:15am and PM registers close at 1:30pm.
  4. Teachers need only enter a student present or late. No codes are entered for absent students. They should enter no other codes – this is the responsibility of the office staff in consult with the DHT.
  5. If a student is late, the teacher should indicate how many minutes late the student is.
  6. If for any reason the network is down, teachers should make a list of those present and send it to the office.
  7. Supply Teachers will be given class lists and asked to return them to the Attendance Officer if they are unable to access Lesson Monitor for any reason.
  8. All staff new to the school will receive training on registration procedures.
- d. Punctuality
  1. The school recognises the disruption caused to teaching and learning by persistent lateness to school and lessons.
  2. Senior leaders, middle leaders and on-call/duty staff will aim to be in high profile positions at lesson change and end of breaks to reinforce the importance of good timekeeping.
  3. All staff are role models and it is therefore vital that teachers are punctual to all lessons.
  4. Any student arriving late to school must report to reception before joining their lesson. For am registration a student arriving after 8:40am must be registered at reception.
  5. Tutors will receive a report of those students in their year groups that have been late to school from their HoY. Tutors and HoYs will intervene where appropriate.
- e. Interventions
  1. A rigorous intervention system is in place line managed by the DHT.
  2. The aim is for students to attend at least 96% of the time. Any student with less than 90% attendance is deemed to be a 'cause for concern' as they are "persistently absent".
  3. Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis with detailed printouts listing attendance figures for the year groups and individuals, which is shared with tutors.
  4. The DHT and HoYs will analyse data with particular regard to:
    - students with patterns of lateness/non-attendance
    - students with less than 96% attendance
    - students with less than 90% attendance
    - students with less than 85% attendance
    - students with large numbers of lates

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5. When a student's attendance is less than 96% a number of interventions are triggered:
    - the DHT (or another designated member of staff) will speak to the student to ascertain why there is a problem
    - a letter is sent to the parent/carer informing them of the problem
    - if there is not an improvement, the parent receives another letter requesting evidence in the event of any further illness
    - if these interventions fail and the student's attendance does not improve, the case will be referred to the school's Educational Welfare Officer for further action which, in some cases, could lead to fixed penalty notices and court action.
  6. In addition to these circumstances for referral the school will also refer to the LA students:
    - With five consecutive days' absence where no contact has been made and their whereabouts cannot be established
    - With 3 days (6 sessions) unauthorised absence in a term
    - With attendance below the LA threshold for reporting (e.g. 90%)
    - Where there has been an unexplained drop in attendance and where no contact has been made with the parents
    - Who are persistently late in arriving at school (after the register has closed - 6 sessions within a period of 6 school weeks)
  7. The school is also able to make referrals to other external agencies that may have an impact on improving attendance.
- f. Reintegration
1. If a student has been off for a long time, it may be deemed appropriate to have a reintegration meeting. This is chaired by the DHT or HoY and may also include other key professionals such as the SENCO, or EWO. The aim is to support the student's return to school and ensure that they have the best opportunity to improve their attendance and achievement.
- g. Rewards and Sanctions
1. A consistent set of rewards and sanctions are an integral part of the school's aim to improve attendance. Initiatives in place include:
    - display of 100% attendance per week in classrooms
    - attendance certificates awarded each long term and good attendance rewarded through entry to 'raffles'
    - regular assemblies on attendance are given by the Senior Leadership Team or HoYs

## 4. Monitoring And Evaluation

- a. A member of the Senior Leadership (DHT) team is responsible for overseeing the school's attendance procedures
- b. The Attendance Officer manages the day-to-day oversight of attendance
- c. Regular line management meetings ensure effective communication and consistent monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- d. The Headteacher oversees all programmes as part of the Senior Team performance management process and an annual report is made to the Governing Body.