

# **RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**



## **Attendance and Absence Policy**

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## Statement of Intent

Riverside School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it more difficult than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and families.

We take a whole school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, regulation support, personalised SEN support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling the highest attendance a pupil can achieve and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other agencies.
- Ensuring families follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the families of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEN they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear for all families pupils and staff.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

Families and pupils will be expected to contact the school's administration team at [admin@riverside.bromley.sch.uk](mailto:admin@riverside.bromley.sch.uk) in the first instance. For further information or queries about attendance please contact the attendance officer.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Attendance Officer. S can be contacted directly at [helen.movahedi@riverside.bromley.sch.uk](mailto:helen.movahedi@riverside.bromley.sch.uk).

## 1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing Remote Education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing Daily Pupil Attendance Data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure
- Children Missing from Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Regulation Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

### **Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending Riverside school for any reason.

### **Authorised absence**

An absence recorded under the August 2024 absence recording codes. under the agree authorised absence codes. Further information can be found at [Working Together To Improve School Attendance August 2024](#)

### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Families keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained

### **Persistent absence:**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### **Severe Absence:**

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### **Missing education**

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/ national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedure.
- Having regard to KCSiE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all families are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will acting at the earliest possibility to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Informing the LA of any pupil's name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and families with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.

Families are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with two or more emergency contact numbers.
- Updating the school if contact details change.
- The attendance of their child/ren at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their child/ren.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending sessions and any agreed activities when at school.
- Attending school as often as they are able.

#### **4. Attendance Expectations**

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and will ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to families and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the required time.
- Attend school punctually.

The school day will start at 09:00am and finish at 3:15pm.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- Due to a large number of specialist transport, the morning register will be marked by 10:00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not on site by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- The morning register will close at 10:15am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- The afternoon register will be marked by 1:45pm. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

- The afternoon register will close at 2:00pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## **5. Absence Procedures**

The absence protocol has been distributed to staff.

Families will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be asked to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last e.g., two school days due to sickness and vomiting.

Where a pupil is absent, and their family have not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, the class teacher will contact the family as soon as is practicable (normally before 10am) on the first day that the pupil does not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

The school reserves the right to request medical evidence where a pupil is absent due to illness or other medical reasons; the school will request supporting evidence if the absence is over 3 days or for individual days over a period of time depending on the attendance percentage of the pupil.

In the case of persistent Absence, where appropriate, arrangements will be made for families to speak to the relevant member of school staff. The school will inform the LA, during targeted support meetings and other communications, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

Where a pupil's attendance becomes a concern, a member of the Leadership Team will arrange a meeting with the pupil and their family to discuss further support.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 days, the school can consult with the LA to discuss the removal of the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

The attendance reporting structure will be as follows:

1. Class tutor/ Administration Staff
2. Phase Leader/ Assistant Headteacher
3. Attending Officer
4. Headteacher
5. Education Welfare Officer

## **6. Attendance Register**

The school uses Sims Management Information System to record attendance registers and ensure they are as and can be analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

The class register remains the responsibility of the class teacher, they should ensure this is completed fully and accurately and returned on time. Staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. The register record whether pupils are:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend, including where known, the reason for this.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = Planned while school closure.
- / = Present in the morning.
- \ - Present in the afternoon.
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed.
- C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
- C1 = Leave of absence granted by the school for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
- C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school aged pupil subject to a part-time timetable.
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made.
- I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- M = Medical or dental appointments.
- R = Religious observance.
- S = Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination.
- T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
- G = Unauthorised holiday.
- N = Reason not yet provided.
- O = Unauthorised absence.

- U = Arrived after registration closed.
- D = Dual registered at another school.
- B = Attending any other approved educational activity.
- J1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.
- K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA.
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity.
- Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements.
- V = Educational visit or trip.
- W = Work experience.
- X = Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school.
- Y1 = Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.
- Y2 = Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel.
- Y3 = Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
- Y4 = Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed.
- Y5 = Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- Y6 = Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law.
- Y7 = Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
- Z = Prospective pupil not on admission register.

When the school has planned in advance to be fully closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years e.g., induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include; the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the management information system.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

## **7. Authorising Family Absence Requests.**

Families will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Headteacher, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team designated by the Head Teacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The Head Teacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by families.

## **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect families to contact the Head Teacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Head Teacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

## **Medical or dental appointments**

Families will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, families will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Families will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the minimal of time necessary.

## **Performances and activities, including paid and unpaid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week;

- During each complete period of four weeks for periods of time not less than three hours a day (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period);
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Head Teacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution**

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the family who the pupil normally lives with and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution e.g., college.

### **Study leave for a public examination**

The school may grant a leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a family/ carer who the pupil normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

### **Pupils subject to a part-time timetable**

In some circumstances and where it is in the pupil's best interests, the school will grant a leave of absence to accommodate for a pupil on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the timings and days on which the pupil is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

### **Religious observance**

Families will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from families for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's families

would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Family travelling for occupational purposes**

If a pupil is travelling with their family as a result of the parent or carer's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the school will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. The family will be encouraged to ensure that the pupil can attend a school where they are travelling to and be dual registered at both schools.

## **8. SEN and Health Related Absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEN and/ or health conditions, including mental health issues, face greater barriers to attendance than their mainstream peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEN Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with medical documents, EHC Plans and/ or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, families can be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact, where appropriate, during their absence.

The school can incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEN and/ or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school to the

optimum level and there have been signs of improvement where possible. The school recognises some pupils may have degenerative conditions.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEN and/ or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Consider incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire where appropriate.
- Work towards identifying pupils' unmet needs.
- Using an internal or external specialist for guidance and support.
- Discussing a reduced or part time timetable.
- Implementing a system personalised to pupils, e.g., ensuring they can request to leave an area if they feel they need a movement break.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school.
- Any other tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **9. Absence in exceptional circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within travelling distance in relation to the pupils and their needs, diagnosis and/ or disabilities.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises are closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The pupil is medically unable to attend.
- Any other avoidable cause which makes attendance impossible.
- The use of the "Y" codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.
- Code Q will be used in circumstances where there is a lack of access arrangements e.g., the LA has not upheld its duty to arrange the pupil's home to school travel.

## **10. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

## 11. Absent Pupils

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the leadership team immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by a member of the leadership team.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - Any specialist rooms e.g., sensory rooms
  - Any outbuildings and playgrounds
  - The school grounds
  - Any other areas
  
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after an agreed time, ~~then~~ the family of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact the family using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- Where appropriate the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's lead adult will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, or is a looked-after child then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Families and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

A member of the leadership team will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

## **12. Attendance Intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the rest of the Leadership Team will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Arrange, attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Communicating with families.
  - Reviews with appropriate adults/agencies in and out of school.
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
  - Using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and Analysing Absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with medical needs, health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly penalised e.g., by setting individual targets.

## **13. Working with Families to Improve Attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with families and work to continue to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g., social services.

The school will work to ensure that there are at least two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for making contact with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that families are aware of their legal duty to ensure that the pupil attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education -

families will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that school is open, save for in certain circumstances e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Head Teacher in advance. The school will inform families about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality where appropriate, and will ensure that families are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil and their families to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school e.g., bullying, the leadership team will work with relevant school staff, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control e.g., they are related to issues within the pupil's environment, medical needs or family circumstances, the school will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities e.g., children's social care, and will encourage families to access support that they may need.

#### **14. Persistent Absence (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need or on a child protection plan;
- CLA;
- Young Carers;
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM;
- Pupils with EAL; and
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/ or discrimination.

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent Absence, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of Persistent Absence to attend school. These include:

- Offering support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their families to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- C-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Regular contact with the pupil's families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an interim AR may be appropriate.

- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and are ragged as Amber or Red. They will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify, address and where possible remove the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of Persistent Absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities e.g., social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe Persistent Absence following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **15. Penalty Notices and Legal Intervention**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after an agreed amount of time (pupil dependent), the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding, arranging or attending a meeting with families and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team;
- Working with the LA to put a family contract or an education supervision order in place;
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Head Teacher can issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for families to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where families allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the

first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Families will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Families who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

### **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and families to improve their attendance. The LA will issue families with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the family and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervision from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the family to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the family to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the family to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist or other professionals.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

### **16. Monitoring and Analysing Absence**

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence in the first instance.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, unauthorised and authorised absence for groups such as:

- The school cohort as a whole;
- Individual year groups;
- Individual pupils;
- Demographic groups, e.g., pupils with SEN, CLA and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of Persistence Absence.

The attendance officer will conduct through analysis of the above data to identify patterns and trends. This could include identifying:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes;
- Particular days of poor attendance;
- Historic trends of attendance and absence; and
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide appropriate reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Governing Board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Leadership Team in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **17. Training of Staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover following:

- The importance of good attendance;
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances;
- The legal requirements on schools e.g., the keeping of registers;
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance; and
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.

The Governing Board will ensure there is dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and any other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **18. Deletions of Names from the Admission Register**

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name;
- Address;
- The full name and address of any family member the pupil normally lives with;
- At least one telephone number by which any family member the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency;
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the family member who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there;
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school; and
- The reason for which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register.

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil, and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

## **19. Monitoring and Review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 95 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the [school website](http://riversideschool.org.uk) (riversideschool.org.uk).

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next scheduled review date for this policy is December 2026.

## **Appendix A – Attendance Monitoring Procedures**

### **Day 1 – First Day of Absence:**

- In the event of an unexplained pupil absence, class teams should ring home before 9:45am. Staff should check emails and with the school office to see if any late messages have been received before contacting.
- If the class is short staffed or it is problematic to make the call, then the class should ask the school office to ring ensuring they pass on an overview of any potential challenges.
- If there is no reply from home, class teams should continue to try and contact home throughout the day. An absence contact record should be completed at this point and should be kept up to date.
- If by 1pm there is still no response from home the class team should make a member of the leadership team aware that they are struggling to get in contact, and should keep trying to make contact. If this is problematic for the class team, they can ask the school office for assistance.
- The class team should make the school office aware of the reason for the pupil's absence once this is known if it is after the register has closed.
- If we know a pupil is absent due to sickness, for example, then we do not need to ring home every day until the length of absence exceeds what would be expected e.g., 48 hours.
- The class team should inform the school office if they have received a message via the transport providers.
- The class team should still contact home if we have had the message via transport providers and remind the family of the correct process for reporting absences.
- The school office will inform the class teacher by email of any absence reasons reported by the family via telephone.

### **Day 2 – Continued absence, reason unknown:**

- The class team should continue to attempt to contact family/ carers. The absence contact record should be continually updated.
- If there is no response by 3pm, the class team should inform a member of the leadership team. It remains the responsibility of the class teacher to establish contact.

### **Day 3 – Continued absence, reason unknown:**

- At this point there should be a discussion between the class team and a member of the leadership team to agree who should take responsibility for making contact. The member of the leadership team should follow up as needed with other professionals during this time. The member of the leadership team should take responsibility for contacting the family/ carer from 4pm if they have not already done so.

- The absence contact register should be kept up to date and the leadership team will consider if a home visit and welfare check are required.

**Targeted Pupils (Line leads will share names of these pupils):**

- Check their attendance daily, ensuring the correct code is entered on the teacher register sheet. If unsure what code to use please ask.
- Class teams are to contact families/ carers every day they are not in and no explanation has been given. Continue calling if there is no answer.
- Class teams should contact family/ carers on the third consecutive day regardless of if contact has been made to check in and offer support.
- Families/ Carers are asked to contact the school office each day they pupil is not attending, except for 24 hour vomiting and sickness. If the pupil is off for a third day, then families/ carers to re-contact.
- Point of contact should ask for medical evidence for appointments (e.g., a letter, screenshot of an appointment card or text message reminder should be emailed across).
- If a pupil is absent for 3 consecutive days, the leadership team should take over contact, continuing to try to make contact.
- If there are any safeguarding concerns or other concerns you should contact the designated safeguarding lead (where appropriate add to MyConcern).

**Pupils to be aware of Line leads will share names of these pupils):**

- Check their attendance daily, ensuring the correct code is entered on the teacher register sheet. If unsure what code to use please ask.
- Class teams are to contact families/ carers every day they are not in and no explanation has been given. Continue calling if there is no answer.
- Class teams should contact family/ carers on the third consecutive day regardless of if contact has been made to check in and offer support.
- Families/ Carers are asked to contact the school office each day they pupil is not attending, except for 24 hour vomiting and sickness. If the pupil is off for a third day, then families/ carers to re-contact.
- If a pupil is absent for 3 consecutive days, the leadership team should take over contact, continuing to try to make contact.
- If there are any safeguarding concerns or other concerns you should contact the designated safeguarding lead (where appropriate add to MyConcern).

## Appendix B – Attendance Agreement Form

### Pupil Attendance Agreement

I agree to attend school every day that I am asked to be in.

As a pupil of Riverside School, I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being on time to school.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.

<b>Pupil Name</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Form Tutor Name</b>		<b>Date</b>	

### Family Attendance Agreement

I understand that it is my responsibility to send my child to school. I agree to send my child to school every day. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed.

<b>Parent/ Carer Name</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Form Tutor Name</b>		<b>Date</b>	