



ATTENDANCE POLICY

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2010

Consultation History

Governors/staff/parents/students	Date
Executive (Leadership Group)	November 2010
Curriculum Committee	November 2010
Full Governing Body	November 2010
Next Review of Policy	

The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College

Attendance Policy

Rationale

This policy is based on the understanding that full attendance underpins any learning. Regular attendance and punctuality is important for the well being and future prospects of students.

Aims

The Ridgeway School aims to achieve the government target of 92% and will specifically

- Encourage regular attendance amongst students
- Support students who have an attendance problem through its own resources and those of outside agencies (e.g. Education Welfare Service)
- Monitor attendance regularly
- Provide the DfES with all the statistics relevant to attendance
- Inform parents of their obligations in respect of their child's attendance at school

1. Guidelines and Procedures

Under normal circumstances the only reason children should miss is if they are too ill to attend.

1. Notifying the school of absence/lateness

Parents have a responsibility to inform the school as early as possible of a student's absence/lateness by telephoning or e-mailing the school and to keep the school informed.

If possible details of how long the absence is likely to be should be provided. On return to school the parent should provide a completed absence slip, available in the student planner, to the student mentor. During periods of prolonged absence parents are asked to keep the Attendance Secretary regularly informed of progress.

2. Registration

Registers will be marked for every lesson throughout the day using the SIMs attendance software. The 'official' morning register will be taken during Period 1 and must be completed by 9.10am. The 'official' afternoon registration will be taken during Period 5 and must be completed by 2.30pm. Students who arrive after these times should be marked as late after registration has closed – Code U. It is a legal requirement that staff complete the register for each lesson either electronically or by sending a paper copy to the Attendance Secretary in the Main Office. The school operates a system called Truancy Call which contacts parents directly if a student is not registered during Period 1. Staff responsible for visits out of school must inform the Attendance Secretary who is on the visit. Registers must be taken for groups involved in events/exams in school and be passed to the Attendance Secretary.

3. Punctuality, Lateness, Signing Out

Students arriving late at the start of Period 1 must sign in at Reception and will be issued a Pastoral Detention. In the case of persistent offenders parents will be contacted by the Pastoral Team. Students late to Periods 2 – 5 should be marked as late on the register by the class teacher and they should be log the incident on Reports Manager, this will be monitored by the Pastoral Team. Students who have to leave the school site during the school day must have confirmation of the reason from parents and sign out in Reception when they leave. If they return during the school day they must sign in on their return.

4. Only the school can authorise absence not the parent. Parents are encouraged to keep authorised absence to a minimum. We encourage thought to be given by parents to whether appointments could be made outside of school hours rather than ask for time off school where possible. Persistent absence or illness not deemed genuine may not be authorised without medical evidence.

5. Unauthorised absence

All absence will be marked as unauthorised until contact has been made by parents to the school either by phone call, email or post and until receipt of a completed attendance slip (available in the student planner). Unauthorised attendance will be monitored and maybe reported to the Education Welfare Service who can impose a fixed penalty notice to both parents for each day of unauthorised absence and for each child on holiday.

Holidays taken without permission or after permission has been refused will be unauthorised and result in Fixed Penalty Notice.

6. Holidays in Term Time

Parents are strongly encouraged not to arrange holidays in term time. Leave for an annual family holiday is discretionary not an automatic entitlement. (Education [Student Registration] Regulations 1995). Permission should be requested on the Request for Leave of Absence Form (appendix 1) at least two weeks before the 1st day of the holiday. When a request is refused parents have the right of representation to the School Governors. The Headteacher has the legal authority to grant up to 10 school days leave of absence in any one academic year. This discretion relates to 'going away' on holiday not merely on day trips or having a holiday at home. The school will use the following guidelines when deciding whether to agree to a request for a family holiday in term-time.

- a. Holiday leave will not be granted where a student already has a poor punctuality and/or attendance record below 90%
- b. Holiday leave will not normally be granted at the following times
 - i. Year 10 from October until the end of the Year 10 exams(usually Term 6)
 - ii. Year 11 from October until the end of the GCSE exams at the end of June
- c. Holiday leave will not be granted for attendance at sporting events, pop concerts, for shopping or any other activities which are purely recreational in their nature.
- d. Year 12 and 13 are strongly advised not to take holidays in term time at any stage of their course.

7. Monitoring, strategies and sanctions to improve attendance
- a. The mentor will receive fortnightly unexplained absence sheets from the relevant Pastoral Secretary to check with students reasons for absence. Contact with parents by the mentor should be made for clarification of reasons for absence (slips in the Student Planner can be used for this purpose)
 - b. The Learning Coordinator and Pastoral Secretary will meet fortnightly with the Educational Welfare Officer to review attendance data and take the appropriate action which may include
 - i. Early contact with parents by letter for students highlighted as causing concern.
 - ii. Student Attendance workshops are run for students identified as potentially a cause for concern. These are run in school with the EWO and a representative from the Pastoral Team.
 - iii. An invitation for parents and the student to attend a School Attendance Panel. These are held three times a year and consist of a School Governor, the relevant Learning Coordinator, Educational Welfare Officer and the School Nurse. Parents of students with an attendance of less than 85% will be considered for an Attendance Panel. An action plan to improve attendance is drawn up at the meeting. A student contract may also be used to improve attendance.
 - iv. Students whose attendance drops below 80% and/or who have not improved following an Attendance Panel maybe referred directly to the Educational Welfare Service
 - v. Attendance certificates will be sent home with each student school report.
 - vi. Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised attendance in line with LEA guidance

8. Rewards

These will be given to encourage and recognize good attendance and punctuality and may include the following

- Certificates for 100% attendance awarded for all students at the end of Term 2, 4 and 6