

Attendance Policy

January 2022

Review: January 2023

RIVERS ESC KS3/4 Attendance Policy

Evidence demonstrates that regular attendance at school is important for individual pupils to be successful and for the whole school community to be successful.

Excellent attendance rates and punctuality are crucial for students to succeed in their education. We would expect that all students aim for 100% attendance but recognise that this is not always possible. We appreciate that occasionally students will be absent from school with good reason.

We want all our students to be successful and believe that regular and punctual attendance is key to successful reintegration and future career success.

Rivers ESC is committed to raising high standards of attendance and punctuality for individual students and the school as a whole. The value of an effective working partnership between parents and school is essential.

We place great value on the relationship between home and school and that education is greatly enhanced when parents are fully involved with schools.

Rivers ESC works closely in partnership with parents and external agencies in order to achieve excellent levels of attendance.

Attendance Levels

For your information the school regards attendance levels as follows:

98% – 100%	Excellent
96% - 97%	Good
95% - 94%	Average/cause for concern
93% - 91%	Low
90% or below	Persistently absent

Facts

Every academic year there are 190 school days.

100% attendance – no missed learning PERFECT

95% attendance – 9 days of learning lost

90% attendance – 19 days of learning lost

85% attendance - 28 days of learning lost

80% attendance- 38 days of learning lost

75% attendance – 48 days of learning lost

70% attendance - 58 days of learning lost

65% attendance – 68 days of learning lost

For your child to drop below 90% means that they have missed 20 whole days or 4 weeks in a year.

Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfEs guidance on school attendance.

Attended Authorised Absence Unauthorised Absence N/A

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site	educational activity Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registration	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer or educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	A Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma or Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling and has been agreed by the school
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on holiday that was not approved by the school

N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code will be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with the O code if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reasons for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrives after the register has closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local or national emergency or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register Register	set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term, bank holiday or inset day

Authorised absence

Authorised absence is when a student is absent from school due to sickness and is generally unable to attend school. The school, after being informed, may authorise a child's absence. This can include;

- Illness
- Family bereavement
- Emergency medical appointments
- Religious day
- Interview for school/college/employment

Holidays, medical appointments, and family occasions are not automatically authorised. If your child is absent and no reason given or the school believes the reason not to be valid – the absence will be unauthorised.

It is the school – not the parent – which authorises an absence. Only the school can authorise an absence.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are **any absence not agreed by your child's school**. If your child has unauthorised absences in an academic year, you may be liable for a penalty notice. To avoid this, it's important to ensure your child's school authorises any absence.

Unauthorised absences include;

- Holidays
- Birthdays
- Shopping
- Visits to relatives
- Looking after siblings

Holidays

Absences during term time play a significant part in under-achievement.

There is no automatic right for parents to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. If you feel that there are extenuating circumstances why this may be necessary, you will need to get permission from the school. If the absence is granted it will be recorded as authorised. However, the government generally views all absence for holidays as unauthorised.

Parents responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996) for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school, that they arrive on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn.

If your child is unable to attend, you must contact the school by 9am with a valid reason for everyday of the absence.

Please ensure you are aware of the school's attendance policy.

Half termly parent consultations are held for you to discuss your child's academic progress with their subject teachers and any attendance concerns with our attendance team.

Please contact the school attendance team if you are finding it difficult to get your child into school and our attendance team will support you and your child to resolve any issues which may lead to non attendance.

Persistent Absence

A child with an attendance record of below 90% is deemed by law to be persistently absent from school. Attendance is monitored by our attendance team and the headteacher on a weekly basis.

The school's attendance team will support the student and parent to improve their attendance.

Local Authority Attendance Officers

Schools can refer to the attendance team for statutory intervention.

The Local Authority usually get involved if:

- attendance is below 80% (80 to 90% is usually addressed by school) and absences have occurred in the previous 8 weeks
- school has attempted to address the absence during this period and can provide evidence and a chronology of work undertaken over the last 8 weeks
- majority of absences are unauthorised

If we are unable to resolve your child's attendance, we will refer your case onto the Local Authority Attendance Officers at Hertfordshire County Council, who have the responsibility for ensuring that parents fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

Daily absence process

It is vital to establish exactly where the student is and to ensure that they are safe. It is stressed once again that it is the parents' responsibility to notify the school in the case of a student being absent.

Morning registers open at 8.45am and close at 9.30am.

If a student is absent from morning registration at 8.45am and there has been no notification from the parent or carer, the school will;

- contact the parent or carer on all available contact telephone numbers by 9.30am
- If there is still no response a parent mail will be sent
- A second phone call to all available contact telephone numbers by 11am
- If the school has been unsuccessful in contacting the parent or carer, the deputy head teacher may request a welfare call from the police to ensure the safety of your child and check any safeguarding concerns.

Afternoon Registers open at 1.40pm and close at 2pm.

If a student is absent from afternoon registration at 1.40pm and there has been no notification from the parent or carer, the school will;

- Contact the parent or carer on all available contact telephone numbers by 2pm
- If there is no response a parent mail will be sent
- A second telephone call to all available contact numbers by 3pm
- If the school has been unsuccessful in contacting the parent or carer, the deputy head teacher may request a welfare call from the police to ensure the safety of your child and check any safeguarding concerns

Please note: That all procedures apply on-site and to off-site/alternative provision students

- All absences are followed up with a back to school to interview with a member of staff from the attendance team.

Incentives and rewards:

It is our aim to reward and celebrate good and improved attendance, which is achieved in the following ways:

- Weekly attendance display for 100% attendance
- Weekly attendance and punctuality raffle – gift voucher
- Weekly letter and certificate sent home for 100% attendance
- Half termly letter and certificate sent home for attendance over 95%
- The local authority awards certificates of recognition to students who have excellent attendance and improved attendance.

Monitoring

- Early warning monitoring will take place: any pupils who have missed 5 or more days in the first 30 schools days in September will be supported to improve their attendance.
- Attendance rates are monitored daily, weekly and on a half termly basis. If the attendance monitored over a half termly basis is causing concern, an initial letter is sent to the parent/carer to raise awareness of the concern – **Letter 1 Cause for Concern letter**
- The initial letter is sent by Rivers ESC. If there is little improvement in attendance during the next half term period, a second letter will be sent to the parent/carer by Rivers ESC – **Letter 2 Cause for Concern.**
- **Letter 3 - Action Plan Meeting required** – If after two letters there is no improvement to attendance, parents will be asked to attend an Action Plan meeting to discuss strategies to support an improvement in attendance.
- If attendance continues to cause concern after the Action Plan has been put in place, a letter may be sent by the Attendance Improvement Team at Hertfordshire County Council.
- Reported termly to the Management Committee

Trigger Points

If your child has been absent from school for 5 consecutive days, the head teacher may request a welfare check to the pupils' home.

If we have the capacity we will pick your child up and bring them to school.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Elective Home Education (EHE) is when a parent chooses not to send their child to school full-time but assumes responsibility for making sure their child receives a full-

time education other than at school. A child may be removed from their school's roll for EHE.

Rivers ESC discourages parents to electively home school their child.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

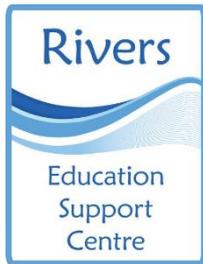
Make sure your child gets enough sleep and is up in plenty of time each morning. Show that you value his/her education by showing an interest. Discuss your child's attendance with them and encourage them to attend school even on days when they may feel under the weather. Contact Rivers to discuss support that we can offer you.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact Rivers to discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important that we work together to work out the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. We have a number of people in the team who would be able to work with you.

When can my child return to school after a period of sickness and/or diarrhoea?

Your child must remain off school for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness and /or diarrhoea.



Rivers Education Support Centre

KS4 Centre, Old Essex Road, Hoddesdon, Herts, EN11 0AA

Tel no: :01992 453 950. Fax no: 01992 453 959

E-Mail: hoddesdon@riversesc.herts.sch.uk Website: www.riversesc.herts.sch.uk

Attendance Concern – Letter 1

28th January 2022

Dear

We are writing to you as our records are indicating that Joe Bloggs' attendance since the beginning of this academic year has been 69% and is now showing a cause for concern. The school deem anything above 95% to be good attendance, and therefore we are a little concerned that Joe's attendance needs to improve to reach this level. Joe's current attendance is below the school's minimum target of 95% and, to put this into perspective, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing half a school year in the five years of compulsory secondary education.

Whilst we understand that in some circumstances there are ongoing diagnosed medical reasons for a students absence and / or other issues, it is important that we as a school are made aware of these and where necessary have any medical notes to support these reasons.

We want to help our students to improve their attendance and we are aware of not only the academic benefits for them if they regularly attend school, but also the personal benefits that they gain. We have a strong team at the school who are here to help you with attendance.

Please remember that if Joe is absent from school then you should ensure that the school is made aware as soon as possible by telephoning the office first thing in the morning on 01992 453950.

If you would like to arrange a meeting or discuss the contents of this letter, then please contact the office on the above number and we will be happy to talk with you, and if required arrange a meeting.

We would appreciate your support to make sure Joe's attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if this does not improve.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andy Stuart



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Attendance Concern – Letter 2

28th January 2022

Dear

I refer to my letter of 1st January 2022 regarding Joe Bloggs' attendance which is currently below the school's minimum target of 95%.

Joe's overall attendance for this academic year is 69% and is showing a cause for concern. The school deem anything above 95% to be good attendance and therefore we are concerned that Joe's attendance needs to improve to reach this level. Joe's current attendance is below the school's minimum target of 95% and, to put this into perspective, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing half a school year in the five years of compulsory secondary education.

The school will now be monitoring Joe's attendance.

We understand that some absences due to illness are unavoidable, however it is important that school are aware of any ongoing health problems so we can put the correct support in place.

As Joe's attendance has dropped below 95%, you will be required to provide evidence for the school to authorise any absences in the form of an appointment card, text message from your doctor's surgery, hospital, dentist etc, a copy of a prescription, a receipt from the pharmacy, all clearly showing the date and time of your visit.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996).

We realise this letter may be a little upsetting, but we do feel strongly that as a school it is important that we continue to monitor attendance to ensure that all of our students receive the very best education.

We want to help Joe improve his attendance. We have a strong team at the school who are here to help you with attendance.

We are offering an appointment, either in person or via telephone, to discuss the matter further and see what the school can put in place to assist you.

If you would like to arrange a meeting or discuss the contents of this letter, then please contact the school office on the above number and we will be happy to talk with you and if required arrange a meeting.

We would appreciate your support to make sure Joe's attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if this does not improve.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andy Stuart

Head Teacher



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Attendance Concern – Letter 3 Action Plan

28th January 2022

Dear

I refer to my letter of 1st January 2022 regarding Joe Bloggs' attendance, which is currently below the school's minimum target of 95%, and I am now writing to you again as our records show (are indicating) that Joe's attendance is still showing a cause for concern.

Joe's overall attendance for this academic year is 69%. The school deem anything above 95% to be good attendance and therefore we are concerned that Joe's attendance still needs to improve to reach this level. Joe's current attendance is below the school's minimum target of 95% and, to put this into perspective, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing half a school year in the five years of compulsory secondary education.

We have therefore requested that our attendance lead, MBC/MG arrange a meeting with yourself and Joe to discuss an Action Plan to ascertain the reason for the large number of absences and see what we can do to assist a better level of attendance.

To arrange this meeting please contact the school office on the above number and they will be happy to talk with you and arrange a suitable time to meet and put together an Action Plan.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996).

If there is no improvement we will progress to the next level of our attendance procedures, where we will refer your case onto the Local Authority Attendance Officers at Hertfordshire County Council, who have a responsibility for ensuring that parents fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

We would appreciate your support to make sure Joe's attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andy Stuart
Head Teacher
Rivers ESC



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Action Plan - Secondary

Date of Action Planning Meeting: _____ Review Date: _____

Attendees: _____

Name of Pupil:	
Name of Parents:	Contact Number of Parents:
Year Group:	Current Attendance:

Reason for Absences:	
Illness:	
Friends:	
Teachers:	
Lessons	
Getting to School:	
Family:	
Other:	

Strategies to improve attendance (See Over)	
---------------------------------------------	--

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- (a) To his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) To any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise*

	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Comments/ Strategy</i>	<i>Dates (from/to)</i>
	Parents		
	Alarm clock/get up earlier		
	Change in bedtime routine		
	Do not book holidays in term time		
	Provide rewards/privileges for good attendance		
	Young person to visit GP		
	Make more time to talk to young person		
	Provide assistance with getting to school		
	Bring into school and ensure meets member of staff		
	Phone school if absent		
	Family First Support Worker		
	School clothing		
	School		
	Attendance report		
	Mentor/link		
	Place of Safety		
	Discussion with Staff		
	Modification of registration		
	Modification of curriculum/timetable		
	Change of Groups		
	Extra-curricular activities		
	Additional Careers advice		
	Work Experience		
	Targeted first day/response		
	Meet with School Nurse		
	Youth Connexions input		
	Customised reward/privilege for good attendance		
	Breakfast Club		
	Celebration letters of attendance (weekly/half termly)		
	Adaptable lessons		
	Support with transport		
	School Clothing		
	Student		
	Make sure you are ready for school		
	Discuss any problems as soon as possible with member of school staff		
	Keep diary – bullying, difficulty with lessons etc.		
	Discuss with parents any concerns or worries		
	Family First Support Worker		
	Wear appropriate school clothing		

Parent Signature:	Student Signature:
Attendance Lead:	



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Weekly Attendance 100%

Celebration Letter

Dear

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to inform you of **Joe's** excellent attendance for the week commencing 4th January-7th January 2022, Joe has 100% weekly attendance.

I know from experience that there is a strong link between good attendance and academic progress and I am sure that this will help Joe to fulfil his full potential.

Please take this opportunity to congratulate Joe and reinforce the excellent attendance habits that have been developed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andy Stuart
Head Teacher



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Half Term 1 Attendance 96%-100%

Celebration Letter

Dear

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to inform you of **Joe's** excellent attendance this half term, for the period 4th January-7th February 2022, Joe has 100% attendance.

I know from experience that there is a strong link between good attendance and academic progress and I am sure that this will help Joe to fulfil his full potential.

Please take this opportunity to congratulate Joe and reinforce the excellent attendance habits that have been developed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andy Stuart

Head Teacher

Rivers ESC