



Attendance Policy

Date of this Review	Spring 2026
Date Approved by Governing Body	5th March 2026
Date of next review	Spring 2028
Challenge and Improvement	

Table of Contents

1.	Rationale	3
2.	Introduction and Core Principles	3
3.	Aims	3
4.	Roles and Responsibilities	5
5.	Information on the School Website	7
6.	Informing the School of the Reason for an Unexpected Absence	7
7.	Requesting Leaves of Absence from School in Exceptional Circumstances	7
8.	How the School is Promoting and Incentivising Good Attendance	7
9.	The School's Strategy for Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts to the Pupils or Pupil Cohorts who need it most	7
10.	The School's Strategy for Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence, including how access to Wider Support Services will be provided to remove the barriers to Attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the Local Authority	8
11.	Review	8
	Appendix 1 - Definitions and Acronyms	9

1. Rationale

Riverside School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for all. The school strives to promote a welcoming, caring and safe environment where each member of the school community feels wanted, safe and happy. Ensuring pupils attend school is a key part of keeping them safe. Staff will work with pupils, parent carers to help them meet their legal responsibility, in ensuring their children attend school regularly. Staff will work with pupils, parent carers to help them meet their legal responsibility, in ensuring their children attend school regularly. The school will establish effective systems of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance. Parent carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality will be challenged.

2. Introduction and Core Principles

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, the attendance policy should account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so schools should always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In development and implementation of their policy, schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, pupils, and parent carers understand these expectations, this attendance policy uses the statutory regulations and legislative amendments set out in **‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’ (Updated August 2024)**.

The policy should be easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parent carers, including being published on the school’s website. Parent carers should be sent it with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.

At Riverside we recognise the link between regular attendance and students’ progress. We expect that all pupils will attend school every day that the school is open unless there is a specific reason for the pupil not attending. We are committed to applying the core principles as set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

3. Aims

To promote the highest possible levels of attendance by pupils the school will:

- 3.1 Establish attendance as high profile.
- 3.2 Apply the attendance policy consistently.
- 3.3 Monitor progress in attendance and report to the governors.

The school will make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school by:

- 3.4 Regularly reporting attendance data to the school governors.
- 3.5 Informing parent carers of school times, term dates and training days.
- 3.6 Having clear procedures for parent carers to inform staff of pupils absence or lateness.

- 3.7 Liaising with the transport services.
- 3.8 Liaising with the Education Welfare Service.
- 3.9 Using reward systems for good/improved attendance.

The school will develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks by:

- 3.10 Identifying designated staff to be responsible for first day of absence contact.
- 3.11 Having clear procedures and records of intervention regarding attendance concerns.
- 3.12 Identifying designated staff to liaise with the Education Welfare Service regarding attendance issues.
- 3.13 Reviewing attendance regularly.

The school will provide support, advice and guidance to parent carers and pupils by:

- 3.14 Ensuring effective communication between school and parent carers.
- 3.15 Informing parent carers when a pupil's attendance falls below 90% over the period of a single term.
- 3.16 Providing parent carers with accurate and up to date information.
- 3.17 Making staff available to speak with parent carers.

The school will develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data by:

- 3.18 Using a computerised registration system.
- 3.19 Consistent use of attendance codes following LA and government guidance.
- 3.20 Identifying and collecting information on developing patterns of irregular attendance and punctuality.
- 3.21 Providing attendance information for the head teacher, governors, relevant staff, education welfare service and parent carers.
- 3.22 The School Business Manager preparing a report from SchoolPod for the Leadership Team members to consider for their section of the school. They will then reflect on this and investigate as needed reporting back to the Head Teacher any concerns, so he is updated before meeting with governors.

The school will further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school by:

- 3.23 Initiating first day absence contact.
- 3.24 Making full use of computer generated letters.
- 3.25 Promoting the expectations of the school.
- 3.26 Encouraging parent carers to visit/communicate with the school.
- 3.27 Sending a Dojo or email to parent carers.
- 3.28 Sending home certificates and rewards for good attendance.

The school will use a system of rewards and sanctions by:

- 3.29 Actively promoting attendance with associated rewards.
- 3.30 Ensuring fairness and consistent implementation of rewards and sanctions.
- 3.31 Working in partnership with the Education Welfare Service, Education Inclusion Service and parent carers.

The school will promote effective partnership with the education service and other key services by:

- 3.32 Ensuring the attendance register and admission details are accurate and up to date.
- 3.33 Carrying out initial enquiries and interventions regarding attendance issues.
- 3.34 Gathering and recording relevant information to refer any concerns to the Education Welfare Service.
- 3.35 Identifying key staff to liaise with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies related to attendance.
- 3.36 Supporting the education welfare service in the use of enforcement tools, when appropriate to do so.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Parent carers:

- 4.1 Have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- 4.2 Must contact the school without delay to report any absence and report a clear reason for absence and provide evidence if requested.
- 4.3 Need to ensure that the school has up to date contact details.
- 4.4 Need to ensure their children have a good attitude to learning and attendance.
- 4.5 Work in partnership with the school to promote the best interest of their child.
- 4.6 Provide feedback to school about policy through feedback questionnaires and parent governors.

School Administration Team:

- 4.7 Liaise with parent carers to build relationships that encourage good communication with school regarding absence.
- 4.8 Monitor attendance on a daily basis.
- 4.9 Ensure clear reasons for absence are given infectious and notifiable illnesses are identified.
- 4.10 Ensure correct attendance codes are used.
- 4.11 Maintain and update all contact information.
- 4.12 Prepare an attendance data report for the Head Teacher every term by presenting each member of the Leadership Team with the information to consider for their phase of the school.
- 4.13 Complete statutory reporting to the local authorities such as the PMOE for East Riding and WelfareCall and online attendance for other authorities.
- 4.14 Send reminder letters and messages to parent carers regarding clearing unexplained absences within 5 days of the absence.
- 4.15 Will identify and monitor pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees, using the SchoolPod system and inform the relevant form tutor and the appropriate member of the Leadership Team when attendance falls below 90% over the period of a single term.
- 4.16 Will contact parent carers if attendance/punctuality becomes a concern by telephone/letter/dojo.
- 4.17 Make first day absence telephone calls by 9.30 am.
- 4.18 Send letter/text/dojo or email if no response to call.
- 4.19 Further pursue absence after 5 days despite an initial communication being received from a parent carers explaining reasons for the absence (except when for an approved absence – e.g. family holiday, attendance at a specialist clinic, etc).
- 4.20 Will maintain pupil notes regarding attendance issues.

Class Teachers:

- 4.21 Record accurate details of attendance at the beginning of each session.
- 4.22 Mark pupils arriving during registration as L (late) and those who arrive after the register has closed (20 minutes after the start of the session) as U (unauthorised absence) in cases involving parent carers transporting their children to school.
- 4.23 Ensure reason for absence is recorded in the register if given verbally by the parent carer or sent on dojo. Pass information regarding absence to the administration office including messages received by any other means and these will be followed up appropriately.
- 4.24 Will speak to every pupil on returning to school about the reason for their absence to ensure they are supported.
- 4.25 Report concerns over pupil absence to the appropriate member of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team:

- 4.26 Will ensure all staff are appropriately trained for their roles.
- 4.27 Will liaise with admin staff over pupils causing concern.
- 4.28 Will liaise with class tutors and the admin staff to monitor pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees.
- 4.29 Liaise with parent carers when significant concerns have been raised in cases of persistent absence/frequent absence.
- 4.30 If necessary, will arrange an action plan meeting in school with parent carers.
- 4.31 If required, will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service and liaise with the designated Education Welfare Officer.
- 4.32 If necessary, when there are concerns over safeguarding or offending will liaise with other agencies (eg Social Care Team/named social worker/Youth Offending Teams/other schools).

Headteacher:

- 4.33 Will ensure there are named key members of staff with responsibility for attendance.
- 4.34 Will submit reports to the governing body on various aspects of pupil attendance.
- 4.35 Will ensure a whole school approach to the development and implementation of the school attendance policy.
- 4.36 Will encourage staff see attendance as part of their responsibility.
- 4.37 Will offer clear guidance to parent carers with regard to their legal responsibilities in relation to attendance matters and information on attendance procedures.
- 4.38 Will establish clear channels of communication between school and parent carers.
- 4.39 Will work closely with the Education Welfare Service with regards to enforcement action.

Governing Body:

- 4.40 Is required by legislation to see that registers are kept correctly.
- 4.41 Should review attendance statistics and trends and support measures to improve attendance.
- 4.42 Support the work of the headteacher and staff in promoting attendance.

5. Information on the School Website

School Times:

It is important that your child is at school for the start of the school day. The school day is made up of two sessions, a morning, and an afternoon. Registers are taken during these sessions. School times are:

8:50am – 3:30pm (Registration period closes at 9:10 for morning sessions and 1.10 for afternoon sessions)

If your child arrives at school after the register has closed then your child will incur an unauthorised absence mark for this session unless an acceptable reason is provided, e.g. evidence of a medical/dental appointment.

6. Informing the School of the Reason for an Unexpected Absence

You must contact the school as soon as possible to inform us that your child will not be attending school. This can be by sending a message on class dojo to the class team or contacting the school office on 01405 763925. You will be asked to provide a reason for this absence. This will ensure that the absence is accurately recorded in the register. For more support you can ask the office to put you in touch with the class teacher, phase leader or safeguarding lead.

7. Requesting Leaves of Absence from School in Exceptional Circumstances

Absence for the purpose of a term time holiday is not usually considered exceptional. Please complete the school's form to request absence from school in exceptional circumstances. The form can be requested from the school office.

If your request is not approved and your child is absent during this time then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the school may refer the unauthorised absences to the local authority and parent carers may be liable for a penalty notice (fine).

8. How the School is Promoting and Incentivising Good Attendance

Riverside School promotes good attendance through:

- 8.1 Celebration assemblies.
- 8.2 Offering termly rewards and certificates.
- 8.3 Communicating success with parent carers via ClassDojo.
- 8.4 Establishing a named person on SLT with responsibility for attendance.
- 8.5 Rewards/certificates/ Dojo points for good attendance.

9. The School's Strategy for Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts to the Pupils or Pupil Cohorts who need it most

All schools record their attendance registers in a school information management system. The school will analyse this data to identify trends and patterns of pupil absence and may use this to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

10. The School's Strategy for Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence, including how access to Wider Support Services will be provided to remove the barriers to Attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the Local Authority

The school will use its attendance data to help it identify pupils whose attendance has fallen below 90%, making them at risk of becoming a persistently absent pupil or below 50% (at risk of becoming a severely persistently absent pupil).

The school will contact you to discuss your child's attendance if there are regular absences. On the first day of absence, the school office will call to discuss absences.

Unexplained absences may receive Class Dojo messages, Emails, Voicemails and Texts to establish communication and gather information. Home visits may be used in individualised circumstances. Ongoing unexplained absences will require letters to parent carers, request to come into school and attend an attendance review meeting, where appropriate.

Where there is no improvement in school attendance and all support interventions both in school and out of school as outlined above have been offered, then the school will meet with the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service (EWS) and agree whether they will become involved and formal interventions may be considered. These formal interventions could include the use of a voluntary parenting contract, penalty notice, education supervision order, school attendance order or prosecution in the magistrate's court.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

As noted in 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' 2022, the school will seek the views of pupils and parent carers as part of the review process.

Date of review of policy: Spring 2026

Date of policy review due: Spring 2028

Appendix 1 - Definitions and Acronyms

Definition of a parent - For the purpose of this policy, as set out within 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' Aug 2024 a parent means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).
- DfE – Department for Education.

Related Legislation and Guidance

Working together to Improve School Attendance August 2024.

The Education Acts 1996 and 2002.

The Children Act 1989.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The Sentencing Act 2020.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended.

The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013.

The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963.

The Equality Act 2010 Relevant government guidance.

Children missing education.

Keeping children safe in education.

Working together to safeguard children.

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

Elective home education.

Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities.

Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges.

Preventing and tackling bullying.

Providing remote education.

Other Related Policies

Behaviour Policy.

Strategic Child Protection and Safeguarding.