





Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy Type:	School Policy (not statutory)
Policy Implementation/Approval	Governors' Curriculum & Pupils' Issues Committee
Policy review delegated to:	Pastoral Deputy Headteacher – Mrs A Williams
	Sponsor Governor – Mrs J Entwistle
Review Frequency:	Every 3 years
Last Reviewed/Approved:	June 2011, 2014, 2017; June 2020, June 2023
Date of Next Scheduled Review:	Summer 2026

Policy Approval:

Signature of Headteacher		Date	13.06.2023
Signature of Chair/Vice-Chair of C&P Committee		Date	13.06.2023

Senior Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Williams, is the dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance as we develop and maintain our whole-school culture, which promotes the benefits of good attendance.

Rationale: Every Day Counts

It is our privilege and our responsibility to provide for the educational, personal, spiritual, social and emotional needs of all the young people in our school. However, as demonstrated by various studies, many of the outcomes as we prepare our young people for post-school life, will be jeopardised if regular attendance is not guaranteed.

As a school we believe firmly that good attendance is both an entitlement and an expectation for every one of our registered students, and it is a legal requirement of parents and carers to ensure that their child is in school. Poor attendance and punctuality will not only result in underachievement at school - it will most likely affect the quality and satisfaction gained from the school experience as well. It is important to remember that there are only four reasons in law for non-attendance – religious observance, student's own illness, school transport not being available and any other unavoidable cause.

Persistent absence

The Government currently defines persistent absence as less than 90%:

Pupils are identified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions. This includes absence with a positive COVID case. 10% of sessions translates to around 7 days of absence across the autumn term.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure the school has high levels of attendance for the benefit of each individual student and the good of the whole school community
- To ensure that parents and staff are aware of the school's expectations and procedures regarding absence and, in particular, unauthorised absences

- To ensure there are robust systems for monitoring the attendance of all students and intervening where necessary
- To ensure consistency of approach across the school and continuity of learning.

Guidelines

1. The school aims for complete attendance by all students but has an expectation of 96% attendance in recognition of the fact that some level of absence is unavoidable.
2. School starts at 8:20 am and students in all years are expected to be in registration with their form teachers by that time, otherwise they will be marked late.
3. Any student arriving after 9:30am will receive a U code indicating that they have missed the morning (a.m.) session.
4. The afternoon (p.m.) registration mark will be taken at the beginning of period 5 by class teachers - or following sixth form procedures for those Year 12 and 13 students who do not have class.
5. Both a.m. and p.m. registrations are statutory responsibilities.
6. Where a student is off-site on a school visit or college placement, for example, the register will be marked accordingly. The supervising member of staff must provide the school office with an accurate list of those students involved.
7. If a student is unable to attend school for a legitimate reason, parents/carers are expected to contact school by phone, email or Synergy message as soon as possible to report the absence and the reason for it. The register will be adjusted accordingly.

Contact:

T: 0161 643 4009 (option 1)

E: admin@clrchs.co.uk

8. Where a student has been marked absent and there has been no notification of the absence by the parent/carers, a truancy call message will be sent. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised until an acceptable reason has been provided.
9. Only the Headteacher may authorise an absence, and in the following circumstances:
 - Religious observance which falls outside the normal school holidays may be authorised up to one day
 - Usually illness will be authorised - but where there is repeated or prolonged absence due to illness for which a student is not receiving specialist medical treatment, the school may request a doctor's note or ask that the student is referred to the school nurse
 - Where school transport has failed and the student is unable to get to school any other reasonable way
 - Where the Headteacher deems the situation to be exceptional, including compassionate reasons

Students are expected to catch up on any work that they miss.

10. Absence will not be authorised:
 - Where no explanation for the absence is provided, the explanation is not satisfactory or evidence is not provided when requested
 - For holidays taken during term time
11. Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. At Cardinal Langley RC High School, the expectation for regular attendance is 96% or above.
12. Student attendance will be monitored on a fortnightly basis by Pastoral & Academic Leaders and half-termly by the Deputy Headteacher who will provide a report on attendance for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Any student with attendance below 90% is automatically a cause for concern as a persistent absentee. Students whose attendance is at or below 95% will also be monitored.

Attendance %	Absence per fortnight	Absence per year	Absence over 5 years
95	½ day every 2 weeks	2 weeks	¼ year
90	1 day every 2 weeks	4 weeks	½ year
85	1½ days every 2 weeks	6 weeks	¾ year
80	2 days every weeks	8 weeks	1 year

13. Where parents/carers are experiencing real difficulty with regards to attendance they are encouraged to contact school to try to resolve the situation.

Where the attendance of a student is causing concern, the following responses can be used:

- Phone call home to express concern
- Letter from PAL indicating concern and/or asking for meeting with parents or carers to address the issue
- Letter from Deputy Headteacher indicating concern and/or asking for meeting with parents or carers to address the issue
- Home visit
- Letter referring the student to school nurse
- Letter referring the student to the Education Welfare Service

14. Where a student is persistently absent with no reasonable cause, the school will use the support of the Local Authority’s Education Welfare Service to pursue attendance orders, penalty notices and court proceedings. Unauthorised absence is recorded and may result in intervention by the Educational Welfare Service, which could include the issue of a penalty notice. Unauthorised leave of 5 school days or more will automatically trigger the issue of a penalty notice by the local authority. Please refer to the ‘Attendance’ page of the school website for more information <https://www.clrchs.co.uk/parents-students/pastoral-information/attendance/> and to the local authority’s Penalty Notice Protocol at Appendix C.

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A – Distance Learning Situations

APPENDIX B – Term Time Leave of Absence Request Form (Planned Absence)

APPENDIX C – Penalty Notice Protocol

Appendix A

To be used in Distance Learning Situations

Added 08.06.2020

In certain circumstances, such as with Covid-19, home learning may well become the main form of education for all students. In these situations, your child's register will be populated with a # code as your child is not required to attend school and your child would be expected to commence home learning (communicated through Microsoft Teams) at the specified time each day. For safeguarding and monitoring purposes, parents and/or carers must continue to inform school if a child becomes ill.

In some situations, school may be able to provide some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education and, in order to ensure that this can be done safely, school would allow only a small percentage of the whole school cohort in school at any one time. Timings of the day would be communicated home if different to usual school day timings.

Under these circumstances, registers would be taken, using the codes below:

Any student not in an eligible year group or priority group	Code X
Eligible year group students (e.g. Y10) but not expected in for that session (due to timetabling)	Code X
Students shielding, self-isolating or with an EHC Plan (where school cannot safely meet need)	Code Y
Illness (as normal)	Code I
Where a student does not attend and is eligible but does not fall into any of the above	Code C

Please keep school informed of any illness/absence by using the school answerphone service 0161 643 4009 (option 1)

Any concerns or queries should be directed to the Attendance Officer:

Mrs V Fisher | E: admin@clrchs.co.uk | T: 0161 643 4009 (ext. 205)

During prolonged distanced learning situations, please keep in contact with your child's Progress and Academic Leader (Head of Year) who will be able to provide you with advice and guidance both pastorally and academically.

Appendix B



Cardinal Langley RC High School Term-Time Leave of Absence Request Form (Planned Absence)

Attendance at school is one of the main factors determining academic progress. As a school, we believe firmly that good attendance is an entitlement for every one of our students, not just an expectation, and there is a legal requirement for parents and carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly. At Cardinal Langley RC High School, the expectation for regular attendance is 96% or above.

Changes to regulations came about in September 2013 and the new law does not give any entitlement to parents or carers to take their child on holiday during term time.

Planned absence **may** be authorised in the following circumstances:

- Religious observance which falls outside the normal school holidays (up to one day)
- Medical reasons
- Where the Headteacher deems there are exceptional circumstances, including compassionate reasons

Absence **will not** be authorised:

- Where no explanation for the absence is provided, the explanation is not satisfactory or evidence is not provided when requested
- For holidays taken during term time (or other similar recreational activities)
- Generally speaking, if the absence creates an extension to a school holiday period or is an extended stay which effectively constitutes a family holiday.

Requests for authorised absence in legitimate or exceptional circumstances will normally only be considered if:

- The student has at least 96% attendance in that academic year and maintains excellent attendance for the remainder of the academic year
- The student is not in a public examination year and any absence will not impact on controlled assessment
- The student catches up on any work that is missed to an acceptable standard

If you do need to request the withdrawal of your child from school, please complete the slip below and return it, with sufficient notice, to Reception/Student Services in the main school office.

Please note: for any activities not organised through the school (sports competitions, drama performances, air/army/navy cadets, for example) you will need to attach a letter from the organising body confirming your child's selection or invitation to take part. In certain cases, you may also need to apply to the local authority for a Child Performance and Activities Licence.

Unauthorised absence is recorded and may result in intervention by the Education Welfare Service. Unauthorised leave of 5 school days or more will automatically trigger the issue of a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority. Please refer to our Attendance & Punctuality Policy and the attendance page of the school website for more information.

Term-Time Leave of Absence Request Form (Planned Absence)

(Please complete and return to Student Services in the main school office)

Name of Child/ren		Form Class	
Dates of Absence (DD/MM/YYYY)			
First day	Last day	Returning to school on	
Reason for absence:			
Signature (Parent/Carer):		Date:	
Headteacher Approval:		Date:	

Appendix C

ROCHDALE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE - Penalty Notice Protocol

1. Rationale:

- 1.1. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. In law an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure a child's attendance at a school at which s/he is a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school.
- 1.2. The use of Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions available under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school.
- 1.3. The Education Welfare Service delivers this Local Authority responsibility.
- 1.4. Parents and pupils are supported at school and Local Authority level to overcome barriers to regular attendance through a wide continuum of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any nature are for use only where parental co-operation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem.

2. Legal Basis:

- 2.1. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority Officers, Head Teachers (& Deputy and Assistant Head Teachers authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.
- 2.2. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004.
- 2.3. The issuing of Penalty Notices must conform to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.
- 2.4. The Local Authority has prime responsibility for developing the protocol within which all partners named in the Act will operate.

3. Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- 3.1 A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of **unauthorised** absence. Requests to the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices can only be accepted where guidance on the marking and maintaining of registers is followed. This guidance - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment) Regulations 2011 can be found at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/1625/contents/made>.
- 3.2. Use of a Penalty Notice will be restricted to one per pupil per parent per term. In cases where families contain more than one poor-attending pupil, multiple issues may occur but this will be the subject of careful consideration and co-ordination. Alternative methods of addressing the school non-attendance might be more suitable such as an Early Help Assessment.
- 3.3 There will be no restrictions on the number of times a parent/carer may receive formal warnings in advance of the possible issue of Penalty Notices.
- 3.4 The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:
 - Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)
 - Parentally-condoned absences
 - Unauthorised holidays in term-time
 - Excessive/Delayed return from an agreed/ authorised holidays without prior agreement from school.
 - Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has officially closed)

This is not an exhaustive list. Each case will be considered individually.

4. Types of Penalty Notices.

- 4.1 Unauthorised Absences Penalty Notices are issued if a minimum of 20 sessions (10 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the current term or within any 12-week period.

It is good practice to issue a formal warning and/or to allow the parents a specified period, usually 15 school days, to effect an improvement.

- 4.2 Penalty Notice for Unauthorised Leave during Term Time are issued if a pupil is absent for a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) for an absence relating to leave during the term time within any 6-week period.

Penalty Notice for Unauthorised Leave during Term Time will be issued without the issue of a warning if a pupil is absent for a period not agreed or authorised by the Head teacher.

- 4.3 Exclusions Penalty Notices are issued if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school and is excluded from that school, either for a fixed period or permanently, his/her parent/carer is guilty of an offence under Section 103 of the Education And Inspections Act 2006 - If that child is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion.

The parent must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of their duty and the days it relates to.

5. Procedure for issuing Penalty Notices

- 5.1 The Education Welfare Service may issue Penalty Notices on behalf of Rochdale Local Authority. This will ensure consistent and equitable delivery, retain school-home relationships and allow cohesion with other enforcement sanctions.

- 5.2 Penalty Notices will only be issued by post and never as an on-the-spot action; this is to satisfy that all evidential requirements are in place and to meet Health and Safety requirements.

- 5.3 The Education Welfare Service will receive requests to issue Penalty Notices from schools and from the Police. These requests will be considered individually and against the following:

- All relevant information is supplied in the specified manner,
- The circumstances of the pupil's absence meet all the requirements of this Protocol.
- Family circumstances/ability to pay is set against the likelihood of securing an improved attendance by issuing a Penalty Notice (this to include any cases of possible multiple issue to any one family).
- The issue of a Penalty Notice does not conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other enforcement sanctions already being processed.
- Referral for penalty notices for leave during term time will be considered for absences relating to the holiday taken in the current term or within the last 6 weeks.

- 5.4 The Education Welfare Service will respond to all requests within 10 school days and will:

- Issue a formal written warning to the parent(s) on behalf of the referrer outlining the details of the offence and advising that a Penalty Notice may be issued if the referral for a fine relates to unauthorised absences. In the same letter, set a period of time, usually 15 school days, within which the pupil must have no further unauthorised absence if the issue of the Penalty Notice is to be averted
- Issue a Penalty Notice through the post at the end of the prescribed period if the required level of improvement has not been achieved.
- If the referral is for unauthorised leave during term time, the Local Authority will issue the fine without the issue of a warning, subject to the matter meeting the referral criteria.

- 5.5 Where the request to issue a Penalty Notice does not meet the defined criteria of the Protocol or is, in any respect considered to be inappropriate, the Education Welfare Service will:

- Advise the person making the request and provide an explanation for the decision not to issue a Penalty Notice
- Consider, recommend and/or implement alternative strategies that may be more appropriate

6. Procedure for the withdrawal of Penalty Notices:

- 6.1 Once issued, a Penalty Notice will only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:
- Proof has been established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person
 - The use of the Penalty Notice did not conform to the terms of this Protocol
 - The Penalty Notice is not paid in full within 28 days and subsequent checks indicate that no offence has been committed

7. Payment of Penalty Notices:

- 7.1 Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
- 7.2 Payment of a Penalty Notice discharges the parent/carer liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the Penalty Notice.
- 7.3 Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days is £60 and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120.
- 7.4 The Local Authority retains any revenue from Penalty Notices to cover enforcement costs (collection or prosecuting in the event of non-payment).

8. Non-payment of Penalty Notices:

- 8.1 Non-payment of a Penalty Notice will result either in the withdrawal of the Notice or will trigger the prosecution process under the provisions of Section 444, 1996 Education Act as detailed above.

9. Policy & Publicity

- 9.1 Deployment of Penalty Notices as a sanction is included in the Authority's revised Attendance Policy.
- 9.2 All schools intending to utilise this Protocol will include information on the deployment of Penalty Notices in their Attendance Policies and this will be brought to the attention of all parents.
- 9.3 The Local Authority will include information on the use of Penalty Notices and other attendance enforcement sanctions in promotional/public information material.

10. Reporting and Review

- 10.1 The Education Welfare Service will monitor and review this Protocol and the guidance and procedures relating to Penalty Notices at regular intervals. Outcomes will be evaluated, reported upon and amended as appropriate.