

Date:	October 2017	Attendance Policy	Document N°	E31
Review Date:	October 2018		Written by:	Stephanie Jones
Version:	002		Reviewed by:	

Purpose

At The Ryes School we aim to ensure that all students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.

The Ryes School will endeavour to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby all students thrive.

All Ryes School staff will work with students and families to ensure each student attends The Ryes School regularly and punctually.

To meet these objectives The Ryes School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and partner schools to provide mutual information, advice and support.

1.0 Aim

- 1.1 This Policy has been written for all staff at The Ryes; pupils, parents and carers. All staff should have a working knowledge of this policy.
- 1.2 Copies of this Policy may be obtained from:
 - 1.2.1 Available electronically on the School Website.
 - 1.2.2 Reference copy in the main School Office
 - 1.2.3 Shared Area – Electronically
- 1.3 Edition, review and frequency
 - 1.3.1 Edition 1 agreed October 2017
 - 1.3.2 The Objectives will be reviewed annually
- 1.4 Relevant Statutory guidance, circulars, legislation and other sources of information are:
 - 1.4.1 SEN Code of Practice January 2015
 - 1.4.2 Behaviour and Discipline in Schools
 - 1.4.3 The Education and Inspection Act 2006
 - 1.4.4 Education Act 2002 and 2011

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- 1.5 The lead member of staff is Stephanie Jones, Head teacher (01787 228344) and the deputy lead member of staff is Amanda Leeks, Education Manager.
- 1.6 This Policy has been written for all staff, parents, carers and students of The Ryes College.
- 1.7 This policy is broken down into the following sections:
- 1.7.1 Context
 - 1.7.2 Persistent Absence
 - 1.7.3 Education Penalty Notices
 - 1.7.4 Procedures
 - 1.7.5 Registers
 - 1.7.6 Notification of Absence
 - 1.7.7 Punctuality
 - 1.7.8 Leave of Absence in Term Time
 - 1.7.9 Summary

2.0 Context

2.1 The Ryes College takes account of and responds to Department for Education 'Advice on school attendance':

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1),(3),(4) and (6) and 458(4) and (5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010; 2011 and 2013.

law, Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states:

"The parent of every child or young person of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special need(s) he/she may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise."

2.2 The Ryes College's Expectations

The Ryes College defines good attendance as 95% and above during the academic year; we expect all pupils to be at least good or working towards this with incremental improvements. We aim to support all pupils in achieving this expectation by operating attendance procedures where staff, students, parent/carers and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership.

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3.0 Persistent Absence

3.1 Any pupil whose attendance is below 85% is defined as a “persistent absentee” by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence. If a pupil’s absence is close to or below this mark, The Ryes College will instigate an attendance improvement plan.

3.2 Should a pupil’s attendance continue to fall, without a valid reason acknowledge by the Head Teacher, serious consideration will be given to ending the pupil’s placement at The Ryes College. This is because a pupil cannot be making good progress if they are not attending lesson and a more suitable provision may be required for that pupil, to meet their educational needs.

4.0 Education Penalty Notices

4.1 The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their child’s regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. A penalty notice of £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days can be issued to non-compliant parents/carers by the Education Welfare Officer. These Officers can use legal proceedings against parents if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court. These are issued under section 444 of the Education Act or section 106 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Pupils should attend The Ryes College on time and ready to learn, every day it is open. It is also a legal requirement of parents/carers that their child attends every day. In the event of an unavoidable absence, parents should notify the College immediately to confirm the reason for absence.

5.2 Unauthorised absences are those which the Head Teacher or the Education Manager do not consider reasonable. Examples of unauthorised and unacceptable absence include:

- Keeping pupils off without a valid reason;
- Condoning truancy;
- Absences which have never been properly explained or evidenced;
- Pupils who arrive late at The Ryes College on a regular basis;
- Taking holidays during term time.

5.3 In the event of no contact between home and The Ryes College regarding absence, the Head Teacher or Education Manager will issue a letter that details the concerns. The matter may be referred to the placement Education Authority. **Parents cannot authorise absence.**

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6.0 Registers

6.1 The register is taken by the Education Manager at the start of the school day, which closes at 9.30am, and for the afternoon session which closes at 1.00pm. If a student is absent for either of these sessions, the register illustrates whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. It also records the nature of any approved, supervised educational activities. Where a student is being educated off site at an alternative provision, attendance is checked on a daily basis and absence followed up from the first day by the Education Manager.

6.2 The Ryes College ensures that national absence and attendance codes are used to code student attendance and absence. (See: www.education.gov.uk)

7.0 Notification of Absence

7.1 Parents are required to phone or e-mail the school before 9.30 am to notify The Ryes College of absence due to illness. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for genuine pastoral reasons (e.g. after the death of close relative). Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside the working day. Where such appointments are unavoidable, the school should be informed in advance and a medical certificate or appointment card must be shown as evidence (appropriately dated). A “present” mark can still be awarded if the pupil attends for a proportion of the session. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day. We always expect pupils to attend The Ryes College before and after appointments.

8.0 Punctuality

8.1 Community time begins promptly at 9.30am. All students should be in their tutor rooms or community room at this time. Pupils who arrive after this time will be recorded as late. Students are monitored on a weekly basis and if they arrive late twice in one week, a telephone call to parents will be made for an explanation. The Education Manager will determine whether the lateness is authorised.

9.0 Leave of Absence in Term Time

The Government regulations stipulate that a:

“...Head teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.”

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9.1 If a parent wishes to write to the Head teacher detailing any exceptional circumstances, we recommend that this is done well in advance of the event or proposed holiday. We take the achievement of our pupils very seriously. Government regulations are explicit, and therefore it will be unlikely that we will authorise any holiday leave.

10.0 Summary

This document is a policy statement about the duty of The Ryes College to ensure arrangements for carrying out the function of pupil attendance monitoring and recording. It updates and replaces previous documentation.