



Be part of the family

# The Regis Academy

Version 1.0

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## Attendance Policy

<b>Date</b>	<b>September 2021</b>
<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>August 2022</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>A Pincher</b>

**Absence Reporting Text number: 07765463394**

**Call: 0121 565 4012**

## **Introduction**

The Regis Academy has high aspirations and your child can play their part in making these a reality. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to aim for excellence. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly. Your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important that you make sure that your child attends regularly, and this guidance sets out how we will achieve this together.

## **Aims of the Policy**

To provide information and guidance to support staff and parents to ensure regular pupil attendance.

The Regis Academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to ensure that their children attend.

All staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

## **Statutory Responsibilities**

The Regis Academy maintains its attendance and admission records in accordance with The Education (Pupil Attendance Records) Regulation 2006, The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 1995 (amended 1997) and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

## **The Importance of Regular Attendance**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Under the Education Act 1996, ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

## **Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

## **To achieve this the Regis Academy will:**

- Give you details on attendance in our termly reports;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and group achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings / events.

## **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the Academy (not by parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical / dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the Academy using sanctions and / or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents / carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

## **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we require parents' fullest support and co-operation in order to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully.

Any PA pupils and their parents will be subject to an Attendance Agreement. The Agreement may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor or a use of team time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities based around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Head of Centre.

### **Absence Procedures If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact the school via text message, telephone or email before 8:30am on each day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.

#### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Send you a text message on the morning of the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Follow this with a telephone call where necessary;
- Attempt to make contact after more than two days of absence to check on progress – this will usually be done by your child's lead staff member;
- Invite you into the school to discuss the situation with your child's lead member of staff, pastoral lead or senior staff if the absences persist

### **Contact Details**

There are times when we need to contact parents about various issues, including absence, so we need to have the correct contact details for you at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have up to date contact details, including mobile telephone numbers and email addresses. There will be regular checks on contact details throughout the year.

### **Sanctions**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the Attendance Officer may refer the child to the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance and to the Head of Centre where necessary. We will try to resolve the situation by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Head of Centre can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Education Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact Sandwell's Attendance & Prosecution Service to ask for help or information. The Attendance & Prosecution Service is independent of the school and will give impartial advice.

## Truancy

On the rare occasions where a pupil is absent from Regis Academy without the knowledge of his / her parent / carer, the following procedure will be followed:

- The pupil's absence on this occasion will not be authorised
- The pupil and parent / carer will be asked to attend a meeting at the school on the morning of the next day of school, or at the earliest possible opportunity, in order to discuss the reasoning behind the pupil's decision to absent him / herself from the school
- Relevant support will be implemented where necessary
- The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored for the remainder of the academic year
- Future absence without a valid reason will not be authorised
- Persistent unauthorised absence can be used to instigate court proceedings under Section 444 of The Education Act 1996

Parents and carers are welcome to raise any concerns they may have regarding their child's persistent reluctance to attend school with the pupil's lead member of staff or the Attendance Officer.

## Lateness

Poor punctuality is unacceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and time with their class teacher receiving vital information for the lesson ahead. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child, inconvenient for the teacher and distracting for other pupils. This can also encourage absence.

### How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **9am** and teaching begins at 9:20am: We expect your child to be in class at 9:00am by the latest.

Registers are marked by **9:20am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in lesson by that time.

At **9:30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, if your child arrives after that time and cannot give a valid reason, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence on their attendance record. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

### Lateness Review:

If your child has a persistent late record, he / she will be expected to attend a Lateness Review **on the same day** a member of the pastoral team.

If attending Lateness Review's fails to resolve the problem, you will be asked to meet with the relevant lead member of staff but you are welcome to approach us at any point if you are experiencing problems with ensuring your child arrives to school on time.

## **Leave of Absence During Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by refraining from taking holidays during term time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

**There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.**

Due to amendments to the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*, as of 1 September 2013, Head Teachers **may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Exceptional circumstances **do not include** family holidays, visiting relatives or friends, spectating at sporting or other events, looking after unwell family members, babysitting younger family members, birthdays or shopping.

If you choose to take your child out of school during term time without leave of absence being granted then it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence on the school register.

If you consider that a request for leave of absence during term time is for 'exceptional circumstances' then you will be required to make the request through the **Leave of Absence Form** which can be requested from the Attendance Officer. All forms will need to be returned to the Senior Leader with Responsibility for Attendance via Reception.

Parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance can be fined £60 (per parent, per child). If the payment is not made within 21 days, this fee increases to £120.

We may will make a referral to the Attendance & Prosecution Service for pupils who take unauthorised leave of five days or more. Such a referral may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

It is important that you understand the circumstances when leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us:

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below 90% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

For any pupils that are on dual role at The Regis Academy, attendance is reported daily to the referring school and any issues regarding attendance are discussed to agree a way forward.

## **Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives**

The Regis Academy has set targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum target of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the region.

Throughout the school year we monitor absence and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided to parents / carers and we ask for your full support.

### **Staff Members Responsible for Attendance are:**

Deborah Digger - Attendance Officer

Anna Pincher – Head of Centre

## **GDPR and DPA Complaints**

All Staff must be aware of the complaints process. All complaints should be directed to the Data Protection Compliance Manager / Data Protection Officer. If any member of staff is aware that a person wishes to complain they should direct the person to the school website and complaints policy and form.

Data Protection Compliance Manager / Data Protection Officer is responsible for dealing with all complaints in line with this procedure.

The school complaints policy sets out the complaints process. This will be the basis for dealing with Data Protection Complaints and appeals. A written outcome will be provided.

If the school does not comply with a Subject Access Request within one month (subject to any extension), or refuses all or part of the request, written reasons will be provided, setting out the principles for the refusal. The data subject(s) will be notified of the right to complain directly to the Information Commissioner, whose details will be in the response.