



St Richard's
R.C. Primary School

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

(March 2022)

ST RICHARD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Our mission states that, at St Richard's, we aim to develop the potential of each individual physically, spiritually, emotionally and academically. Excellent attendance for all our pupils is therefore a high priority for the school.

At St Richard's, we believe that each child has the right to an outstanding education which can be provided in partnership between school, parents and the community. We therefore aim, through robust, consistent and fair management of pupil attendance, to establish an environment in which each child may develop their full potential.

Every child in our school has the right to enjoy learning and play, feeling happy and comfortable. In accordance with the ethos and mission statement of St Richard's RC Primary School, we pledge to respect the equal human rights of all our pupils and to educate them about equality. In all matters relating to pupil attendance, we will be particularly mindful of the need to protect pupils and all other members of our community from any form of bullying. This will make all our children feel safe and welcome.

Schools nationally have seen a negative impact on their attendance figures as a consequence of COVID-19. At St Richard's, we have considered our specific context and this policy is our response to ensure the best possible rates of attendance from now on.

Who is this policy for and who is responsible for implementing it?

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents and carers, pupils and all members of school staff. This policy is written particularly with staff, parents and carers in mind. Parents and carers have a very important role in making sure that their child(ren) attend(s) regularly and this policy sets out how we can achieve this by working in partnership.

Why Regular Attendance is so important

St Richard's is a very successful school and our children play an important part in making and keeping it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to strive for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the attendance **rate** across primary schools nationally had remained broadly stable at 96%. Our school target is set at 1% above the national average and will be communicated to parents and carers on a regular basis. Therefore, our current (2021-22) whole school attendance target is 97%.

Securing Excellent Attendance

To help achieve this, we will:

- **Inform** parents/carers of the high priority which attendance has at St Richard's by providing details and reminders in our weekly newsletter, ParentMail and other available media. We will give parents details of our annual holiday patterns well in advance.
- **Reward** good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and other rewards.

- **Celebrate** good attendance of individual pupils and whole classes at assemblies and in the newsletter
- **Analyse** attendance data for all groups of pupils at St Richard's (using SIMs and FFT Attendance Tracker) on a regular basis in order to detect patterns and take appropriate action if necessary.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the school year for **any reason**. Absence at this level (or at risk of moving towards this level) is given high priority at St Richard's and parents will be informed. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. Any pupils entering into this category for more than one half term will be subject to a Penalty Warning Letter which could then lead to a fine should your child's attendance not improve.

Absence reporting procedures. If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us by telephone on 0161 224 5552 as soon as possible **on each day** of your child's absence unless school has notified you of the length of absence required (eg – statutory exclusion periods for illnesses such as chickenpox).
- If your child is absent and if we have not heard from you, we will telephone you at 10am or soon after on the first day of your child's absence. You will then be reminded that you must notify us as soon as possible on each day of absence.
- In some cases we may ask you for evidence relating to your child's illness.

Outside Agencies

If families are experiencing difficulties which impact on their child's attendance, there are a number of outside agencies which the school can access to support families. Please contact Mrs Morrin on 0161 224 5552 if this is applicable to your family.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. At St Richard's, we manage lateness in the following ways:

- The school day starts at 9 am. We expect all children to be in school by this time.
- Children who arrive after this time have to report to the Reception and are marked late.
- Registers are closed at 9.30 am. Children who arrive after 9.30 am will be recorded as present for safety reasons but this mark will not count as a present mark and will be marked with an unauthorised absence for the morning session. This may mean that you could receive a Penalty Notice if the problem persists
- If you are experiencing difficulties with punctuality, please make an appointment with the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

Religious Observance

In line with Manchester Local Authority guidance only **one day** for each religious festival (**no more than 3 in any one academic year**) will be counted as an authorised absence. Additional days off for extended celebrations will be treated as an unauthorised absence.

Holidays in Term Time:

The headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless it is for exceptional circumstances. Any child who has 5 sessions (2.5 days) of un-authorised absence may be issued with a Penalty Warning. Any further un-authorised absence after this time and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Each such Penalty Notice incurs a fine. **Any period of leave taken in excess of that agreed, may result in the child's place at St Richard's being at risk.**

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure all our children have high levels of attendance. It is important we work together to achieve our school target of 97% attendance for the academic year 2021/2022.

Procedures for triggering Absence Letters

During every academic year, all pupils' attendance will be reviewed by the school's administrative staff at least once every eight weeks. During the Autumn Term, pupils whose attendance is less than 93% will receive the school's 1st Attendance letter (see Appendices).

If attendance is still below 93% after a subsequent four-week period, the school's 2nd Attendance (Review Meeting) letter will be sent and parents/carers will be invited to school to discuss their child's attendance and ways to improve it. At this meeting an action plan will be written with parents and put in place. If the parent/carer fails to attend this meeting, then Manchester local authority's Statutory Attendance Team will be informed and may become involved.

If, after attending an Attendance Review Meeting and a further 4-week period, a child's attendance remains below 93%, then a third and final letter will be sent to parents. This letter will notify parents that a penalty notice has been requested from the LA Statutory Attendance Team.

During the Spring Term, the attendance will be measured at 94% and below, and in the Summer Term, 95% and below. An Attendance Monitoring file is used to file copies of letters that have been sent to parents and carers. The above procedure for attendance is mirrored in our monitoring of punctuality (see letter templates in the Appendices).

Children Missing in Education

St Richard's RC Primary School must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous absence of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school, and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

Supporting Children at School with Medical Conditions

We are committed to providing a good education and promoting excellent attendance to all our pupils regardless of individual circumstances. Where a pupil is unable to attend school for medical reasons the school will work alongside the local authority, health professionals and parents to provide an alternative provision which will meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

Wherever possible, we want this provision to be at school, in order to ensure continuity for pupils. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances that is not possible and provision for such cases will be considered on an individual basis.

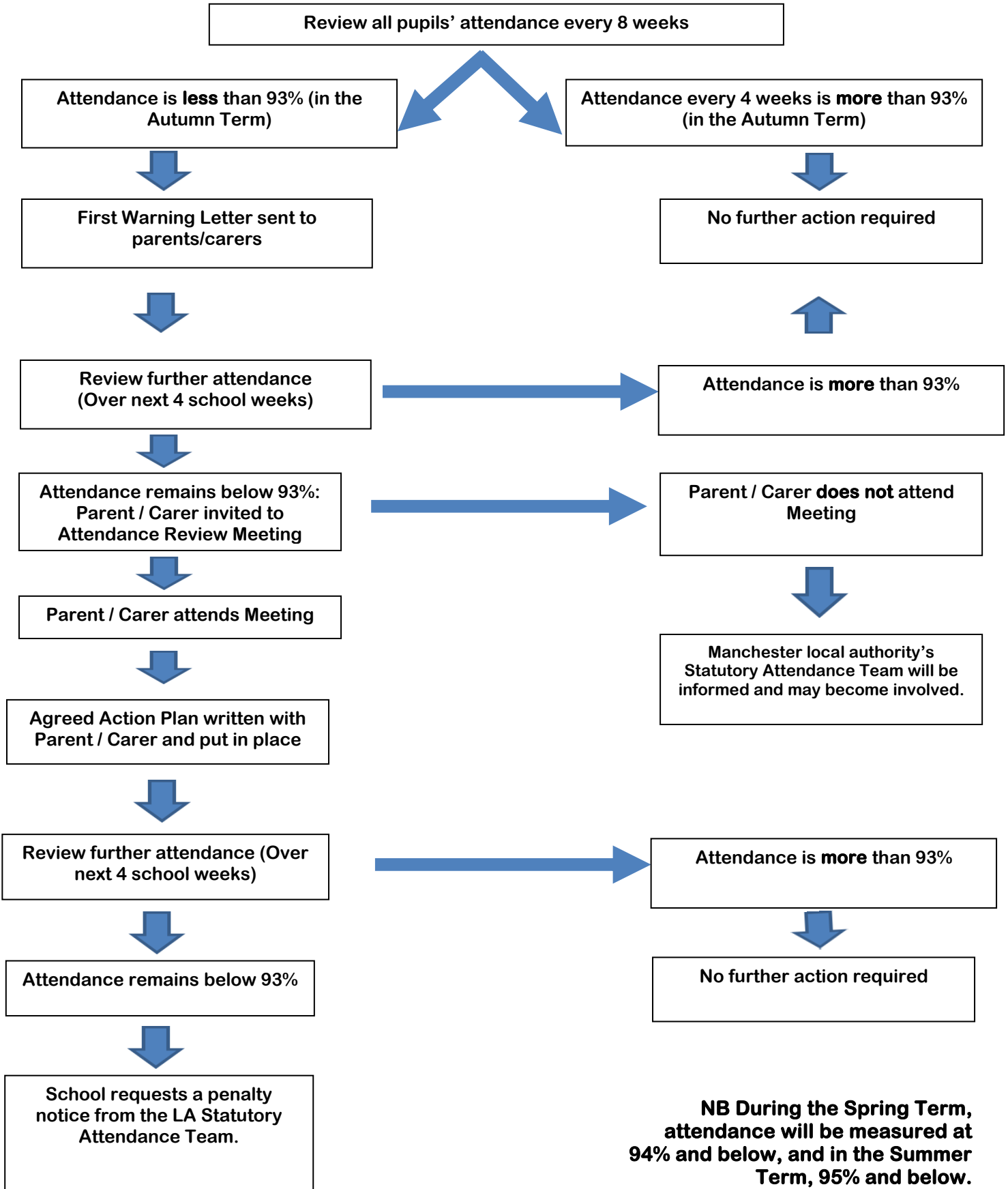
Conclusion

The school has a legal duty to publish its attendance and absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

**This policy was approved and adopted by the Governing Body
on Friday 18th March 2022.**

Appendices

Flow chart for monitoring pupil attendance





HEADTEACHER:
MR J MURRAY

WILPSHIRE AVENUE
LONGSIGHT
MANCHESTER
M12 5TL

TEL: 0161 224 5552

FAX: 0161 248 6003

E-MAIL: admin@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk

DATE TO GO HERE

School Attendance: First Warning Letter

Dear

Good attendance at school is essential for all children. Research shows that children who attend regularly and punctually perform better at school and in their later lives than those with poorer attendance. Therefore, the government expects the level of school attendance for all primary aged pupils to be no lower than 96%. Our current school target attendance rate is 97%.

Your child has missed _____ sessions since September. This gives an attendance of ___% which is well below the school target level. Therefore, we are monitoring your child's level of attendance each half term and looking forward to seeing an improvement. Please look at the example below and compare it against your own child's attendance.

Attendance

100% =	Excellent attendance
90% =	½ days absence every week
80% =	1 days absence every week
70% =	1½ days absence every week
60% =	2 days absence every week
50% =	2½ days absence every week

Arriving late for school

10 mins. late every day = missing 6 full days in a year
30 mins. late every day = missing 4 full weeks in a year

We are aware that children may have specific circumstances (eg – illness) that prevent them from attending school and this could have brought your child's attendance level down. Holidays, authorised or not, have the same effect and have a detrimental impact on your child's education.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter in full, please do not hesitate to contact school.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Murray
Headteacher



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MANCHESTER
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Date

Attendance Review Meeting

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you regarding [name of child's] continuing poor rate of attendance at school. We wrote to you on [date] when your child's rate of attendance was [insert]. After four more weeks, your child's attendance is still at [insert rate]. This is not a sufficient improvement.

We are therefore inviting you to an Attendance Review Meeting at school. This is a meeting between Parent/Carer and Headteacher. The aim of the meeting is to discuss the reasons for your child's current rate of attendance as well as to determine ways in which future rates of attendance can be improved.

It is essential that you attend this meeting. Non-attendance will lead to Manchester's Statutory Attendance Team being informed and their level of intervention increasing.

A meeting has been scheduled to take place at school on [date and time].

Please indicate that you have received this letter and that you will be attending on the reply slip below.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr J. Murray
Headteacher

Attendance Review Meeting

I have received the letter inviting me to an Attendance Review Meeting at school on [date and time]

I will/ will not be attending the meeting.

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer of: _____



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School Attendance: Consideration of Legal Proceedings

DATE

Dear

I have contacted you previously on two occasions regarding the poor attendance of your child [insert name].

_____ % Attendance at 1st Letter
_____ % Attendance at 2nd Letter

[Name of child's] current rate of attendance is still unacceptably low at [insert percentage]. I am concerned that there has been no significant improvement. Therefore, due to the seriousness of the situation, I have referred the matter to the LA Statutory Attendance Team, who may issue a Penalty Notice.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Murray
Headteacher



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Date

Failure to Attend an Attendance Review Meeting

Dear Parent/Carer

You were invited to attend an Attendance Review Meeting on [insert date and time] in order to discuss ways to improve the unsatisfactory attendance of your child [insert name of child].

Please phone school on 0161 224 5552 as soon as possible in order to re-arrange your attendance at this meeting. Failure to do so within 5 working days may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

Failure to engage in order to improve your child's current rate of attendance is one factor that may be taken into consideration when deciding to issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996.

Your non-attendance means that Manchester LA's Statutory Attendance Team has been informed and their level of intervention will increase.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Murray
Headteacher



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MR J MURRAY

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FAX: 0161 248 6003

E-MAIL: admin@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk

Punctuality in school: First Warning Letter

DATE _____

Dear _____

Being punctual is an essential habit which all children should learn. Research shows that children who attend school regularly and punctually perform better at school and in their later lives than other pupils. We expect children to arrive at school on time every day.

Your child has been late for school on _____ occasions since September. This gives a punctuality percentage of ____% which is well below our target level.

At St Richard's, school is open to all pupils from 8.30am and we expect your child to be in school by 8.58am. The gates into school close at 8.58am and, if your child arrives after their gate closes, then they must come into school by way of the main school office. **If this is the case, they will automatically receive a late mark in the register.**

We are monitoring your child's level of punctuality each half term and looking forward to seeing an improvement. Please look at the example below and compare it to your own child's punctuality:

Arriving late for school

10 mins. late every day = missing 6 full days in a year

30 mins. late every day = missing 4 full weeks in a year

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter in full, please do not hesitate to contact school.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Murray
Headteacher



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Date

Punctuality Review Meeting

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you regarding [name of child's] continuing current poor rate of punctuality at school. We wrote to you on [date] when your child's rate of punctuality was [insert]. After four more weeks, your child's punctuality is still at [insert rate]. This is not a sufficient improvement.

We therefore request that you attend a Punctuality Review Meeting at school. This is a meeting between Parent/Carer and Headteacher. The aim of the meeting is to discuss the reasons for your child's current rate of punctuality as well as to determine ways in which future rates of punctuality can be improved.

It is essential that you attend this meeting. Continued poor punctuality may lead to Manchester LA's Statutory Attendance Team being informed and their level of intervention increasing.

A meeting has been scheduled to take place at school on [date and time].

Please indicate that you have received this letter and that you will be attending on the reply slip below.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Murray
Headteacher

Punctuality Review Meeting

I have received the letter inviting me to a Punctuality Review Meeting at school on [date and time]

I will/ will not be attending the meeting.

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer of: _____



Pupil:		Rate of attendance at date of review:	
Date of Birth:		Review date:	
Year Group		Target rate of attendance:	

Actions:	Desired outcomes:	Time scale:

Parent/ Carer Signature _____

Headteacher Signature _____



Pupil:		Rate of punctuality at date of review:	
Date of Birth:		Review date:	
Year Group		Target rate of punctuality:	

Actions:	Desired outcomes:	Time scale:

Parent/ Carer Signature _____

Headteacher Signature _____