

# The Regis School

## ATTENDANCE POLICY



**The Regis School**  
The best in everyone™  
Part of United Learning

*Unicef RRS Article 18 "Both parents share responsibility for bring up their child and should always consider what is best for the child"*  
*Article 28 "Every child has the right to an education"*

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a successful school and your son/daughter plays his/her part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve of their best. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your son/ daughter should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- 1.2 It is very important therefore that you make sure that your son/ daughter attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### 2. Why Regular Attendance is so important

- 2.1 Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. Ensuring your son's/daughter'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.

### 3. Promoting Regular Attendance

- 3.1 **Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.**
- 3.2 To help us all to focus on this we will:
  - a. Report to you at least termly on how your son/daughter is performing in school, what their attendance rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
  - b. Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual, class and House achievements;
  - c. Reward good or improving attendance through the house point system, class and House competition and certificates
  - d. Run promotional events when parents, students and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

### 4. Understanding Types of Absence

- 4.1 Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required in writing.
- 4.2 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like

illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other reasons the **school** deems to be unavoidable. Students will not be allowed to leave school for medical appointments without a note or an appointment card.

- 4.3 Regular days off ill may be challenged by letter and you may be asked to provide medical evidence for future absences. Lack of any medical evidence for these days off will lead to school not authorising the absence leading to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 4.4 High levels of unauthorised absence can lead to the involvement of the schools Education Welfare Officer (EWO). **The average student in England and Wales has only 6 days absence per year which is the equivalent to 97% attendance.**
- 4.5 Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes:
- a. Parents/carers keeping students off school unnecessarily
  - b. truancy before or during the school day
  - c. absences which have never been properly explained
  - d. students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
  - e. shopping, looking after other students or birthdays
  - f. Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- 4.6 Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the student. If your son/ daughter 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.

## **5. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

- 5.1 A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parent's full support and co-operation to tackle this.
- 5.2 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 students are tracked and monitored carefully through our regular attendance tracking meetings. Students are likely to also be involved in other interventions where absence affects attainment.
- 5.3 Selected PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: additional support through their form tutor or Head of House, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. **All PA cases are also automatically made known to our Education Welfare Officer (EWO).**

## **6. Absence Procedures**

- 6.1 If your son/daughter is absent it is your responsibility to:
- a. Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence (before 9am);
  - b. Send a letter or email in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- 6.2 If your son/daughter is absent we will:

- a. Attempt to telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- b. If absence persists your son / daughter's tutor will make contact to discuss this with you. If Attendance falls below 90% your son/ daughter's Head of House will write to you to highlight this. if there is no improvement this will be followed up by a phone call and you will be invited in for a meeting with your Head of House and son /daughter;
- c. If after 6 weeks there is still no improvement we will refer the matter to our Education Welfare Officer;
- d. Ten unauthorized absences in a ten week period may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **7. Telephone Numbers**

- 7.1 There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your son/ daughter by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There is a check on telephone numbers at the start of the year. Please ensure that you inform us of any change after this time.

## **8. The Education Welfare Officer**

- 8.1 Early intervention is nearly always successful in improving attendance. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the student to our Education Welfare Officer. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the student's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, he/she can use sanctions such as Fixed 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 Authority. Alternatively, parents or students may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information: they will give impartial advice. Please telephone the school.

## **9. Lateness**

- 9.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your son/ daughter misses the start of the day they can miss essential work. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the student and can also encourage absence. Students that are late to school will serve a breaktime detention.
- 9.2 How we manage lateness. The school day starts at 8.30am and we expect your son/daughter to be in class at that time. The school is open from 8.15am
- 9.3 Students are considered to be late to school if they arrive after 8.25am. Registers are marked immediately and submitted by 8.40am and your son/ daughter will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- 9.4 At 9.00am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your son/ daughter arrives after that time 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. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution if the problem persists.
- 9.5 If your son/ daughter has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with their Form Tutor or Head of House to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your son/daughter to school on time.

## 10. Holidays in Term Time

- 10.1 Taking holidays in term time will affect your son/ daughter's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking your son/daughters away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your son/ daughter's education. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and at the Regis School holidays in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances (e.g. A Parent in the forces being deployed for a tour of duty overseas). Any holiday taken, which has been applied for and declined, and which involves 10 or more sessions (5 school days of Absence) will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued and subsequent fine.
- 10.2 If there are very exceptional circumstances the school may authorise leave of absence – in these circumstances parents should apply to the Principal using Notification of Leave of Absence Form which can be collected from the Attendance Officer or Reception.
- 10.3 All applications for holidays in these exceptional circumstances must be made in advance and a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of absence in term time. It is important that you understand the circumstances when leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us:
- a. In the month of September
  - b. When a student is just starting the school. This is very important as your son/daughter needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
  - c. Immediately before and during assessment periods - GCSE or any other public examinations.
  - d. When a student's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
  - e. Where a student's attendance rate is already below 95% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

## 11. School Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives

- 11.1 The school has targets to improve attendance and your son/daughter has an important part to play in meeting these targets.
- 11.2 **A satisfactory level of attendance for any student at the Regis School is 97%** and as a school we aim to achieve at least 95% attendance overall. We will keep you updated regularly about progress towards this target and how your son's/daughter's attendance compares. Our aspiration is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.
- 11.3 Through the school year we monitor absences 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 in letters to parents and we ask for your full support.

## 12. Those People Responsible for Attendance Matters in this School are

- 12.1 Mrs Gaffney – Attendance Officer
- 12.2 Your son's/daughter's Form Tutor or Head of House
- 12.3 Paula Chalkley – Education Welfare Officer
- 12.4 Your House Senior Leadership Team link
- 12.5 Mr Knight, Vice Principal (Standards)

### 13. Summary

13.1 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 sons/daughters attend and arrive on time. All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

**‘Nationally only 20% of students with attendance below 80% achieve 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE’**

Date of origination: July 2010  
Date of last review by Governing Body: December 2015  
Date of next review: December 2017

## How We Manage Attendance at TRS

**Subject teachers** are responsible for:

1. **Accurately completing the statutory AM and PM registration for students in lesson 1 and 5.**
2. Accurately completing lesson monitor in every lesson and monitoring patterns of attendance.
3. **Highlighting and discussing problems of non-attendance with their Head of Faculty and putting in place appropriate interventions to improve attendance to their lessons.**
4. Being aware of students that they teach that are identified as persistent absentees

**Form Tutors** are responsible for:-

1. Registering all students in the tutor period daily.
2. Monitoring attendance figures daily and weekly.
3. Welcoming back and meeting with students who have been absent and reading all letters of explanation re: absence and making the correct insertion in lesson monitor. **No 'N' code can stay on the register for more than 2 weeks**
4. Pursuing any absences which have not been explained, by either contacting the parent/carer direct, asking the Attendance officer to do so, or notifying the appropriate Head of House.
5. Identifying any 'patterns' of absence and notifying the appropriate Head of House of their concern.
6. Make contact home for any students who have attendance concerns but are above 90% attendance.
7. Highlighting and discussing attendance targets, procedures and issues with members of their tutor group.
8. For all students in their form with attendance below 90% completing detailed information for the RATs monitoring spreadsheet in time for EWO meetings.
9. Being aware of any students who are identified as Persistent Absentees and notifying the House office immediately of their absence.

**Heads of House** are responsible for:-

1. Ensuring that all teachers and tutors complete their attendance responsibilities.
2. Checking all registers weekly and pursuing any unexplained or 'suspicious' absences passed on from tutors with parents / carers and discussing these with their SLT link
3. Highlighting any unauthorised absences and discussing strategies with tutors;
4. Monitoring weekly attendance figures for the House group and supplying reasons where the % return is lower than **90%** to Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare)
5. Ensuring that up to date and detailed attendance information is available for the RATs meetings.
6. Send letter home to any student who has attendance below 90% (enter on RATS), if no improvement after 2 weeks contact parent/carer by phone (enter on RATS), if no improvement after 2 weeks meet with parent and student (enter on RATS), if no improvement after 2 weeks refer case to EWS.
7. Monitoring and developing action plans for all students who are identified as having persistent absence to improve attendance.

In the case of **Long Term Absence** through diagnosed medical problems the Head of House will:

1. Liaise with parents, form tutor, Head of Faculty and teachers re: the setting of suitable work for students as the need arises and arranging for it to be taken home and returned to school;
2. Notify staff via the morning meeting when students are expected to be absent for longer than a few days and when the student return so that reintegration can be effected smoothly.

**Attendance Officer** is responsible for:-

1. Completing Lesson monitor inputting the correct code / comment for students who arrive after registration closes;
2. When notified of student absence via the telephone inputting the correct code/ comment into SIMs lesson monitor
3. Completing a \*'Booked Out' notification form for any student leaving the premises during the school day;
4. Initiating Truancy Call to parents of students where there is unexplained absence or lateness to school.
5. Providing absence reports for Parents Evenings
6. Supporting the preparation of data for RATs and attending and recording information / actions at RATs meetings.
7. Preparing follow up letters and communication based on RATs outcomes.
8. Providing daily update for HoH regarding any post registration truancy and other patterns of truancy
9. Preparing data for the persistent absence workbook
10. Liaising weekly with EWO
11. Preparing paperwork for Fixed Penalty Notices
12. Collating all attendance figures for both internal and external use :

- below 92%
- % individual
- % tutor group
- lateness figures
- Attendance certificates for EWO

<b>Daily:</b> Tutor	<b>Termly:</b> HoH Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare) ULT
<b>Weekly:</b> Tutors HoH Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare) EWO	<b>Yearly:</b> DfE return Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare) ULT

**Educational Welfare Officer will:**

1. Give copies of 'referred students' paperwork to Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare) and Head of House
2. Work with the families to provide either reintegration programme or take legal action
3. Feedback on outcomes
4. Chair RATS meetings 3 weekly for all Houses and meet HoH fortnightly to target specific groups of students
5. Participation in attendance planning meetings
6. Liaise with Vice Principal half-termly give feedback on:
  - procedure
  - figures: % monthly / Truancy triggers

**Vice Principal (Standards)** is responsible for:-

1. Overseeing all aspects of the attendance monitoring system through weekly returns and regular reports from Head of House.

2. Working with Head of House and EWO to agree strategies in the most difficult cases of student absence
3. Compiling 'whole-school' attendance data as required by the Principal/Governors/ULT
4. Reporting regularly to the Principal concerning all aspects of attendance.
5. Completing any ULT, LA or national forms re: attendance/absence statistics as the need arises  
Vice Principal (Personal Development and Welfare) /Data Manager / Attendance Officer)
6. Considering all requests for holiday in term time.
7. Participation in attendance planning meetings.



## **MONITORING - Summary**

1. On a **daily** basis tutors will take register and chase notes or ask attendance clerk to do so, update absence list, and inform Head of House of concerns. Persistent lateness should be sanctioned and noted. **Weekly** complete absence returns. **No 'N' code can stay on the register for more than 2 weeks**
2. **In every lesson** teachers will register all students using lesson monitor.
3. 'First Day of Absence Check' students may be contacted at home by office via truancy call.
4. Every **2 weeks** the HoH will look at percentage figures for each tutor group and recognise the Tutor group with the highest attendance
5. Every 3 weeks the RATS meeting will address all students with attendance below 90% and review and confirm actions
6. As a student's percentage attendance falls below 90% concerns to be discussed by HoH with EWO. Phone calls, Letters and parental meetings will then be actioned by Tutor or HoH raising the concern.

## **TRUANCY CHECKS**

Can take place throughout the day through lesson monitor – Heads of House should set up monitoring groups in SIMs and check on a lesson by lesson basis.

## **ATTENDANCE PLANNING MEETING**

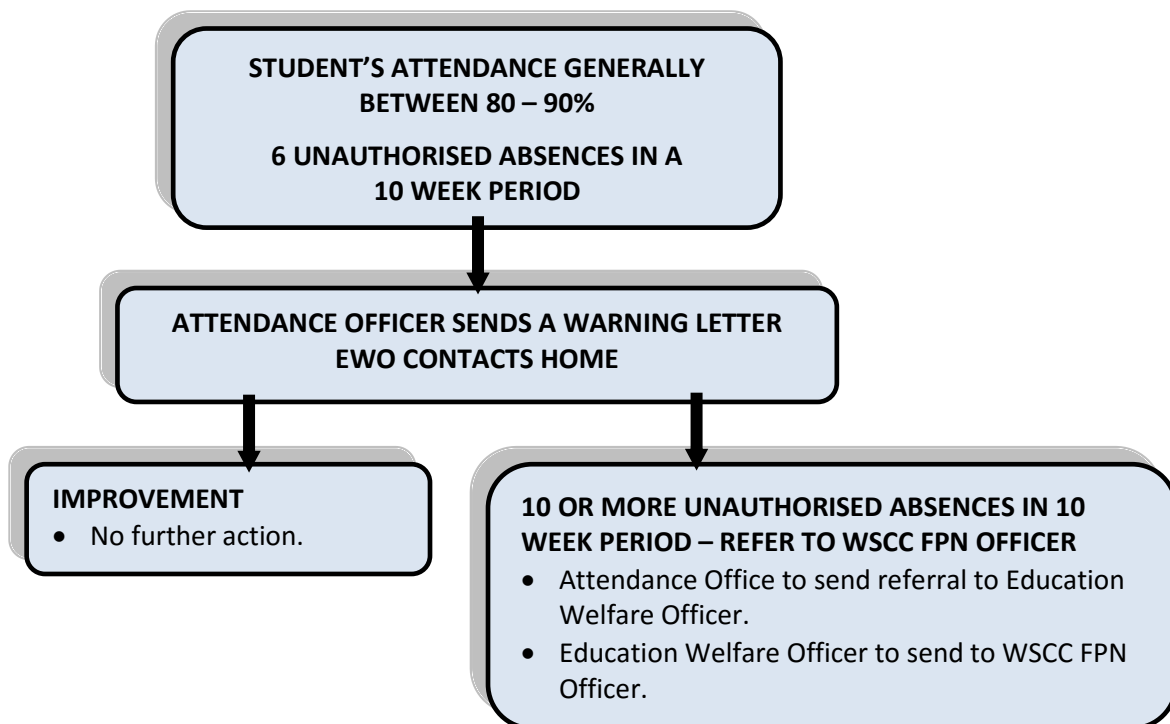
In cases of very poor attendance where the school is about to initiate legal proceeding parents may be invited to an attendance planning meeting with a member of the local governing body, a vice principal and the education welfare officer to clarify reasons for absence, parental responsibilities and the legal process. Further support that the school is able to offer will also be outlined.

## RATS process 2016/2017

- Tutor
  - Following any absence, form tutor meets with student and discusses reason for absence. Conversation logged on RATS
  
- 1st RATS:
  - Tutor action should be logged as to action taken for discussion at RATS
  - HOH / EWO agree appropriate letter to be sent (e.g.RATS / holiday)
  - Tutor to continue to monitor and meet with student if further drop – HOH to advise tutor of action
  - Attendance Officer to produce agreed letters.
  
- 2<sup>nd</sup> RATS (3 weeks later)
  - If no improvement– HOH ensure tutor makes further contact with parent / carer and meets if appropriate
  - Tutor agrees attendance targets and gives target card to student
  - All meetings logged and saved to SIMS and copied to PCY and HOH to be saved to student file
  - Consider any further letter to be sent (Pre NAMA / NAMA)
  - Attendance Officer / HOH administrator to produce agreed letters
  
- 3<sup>rd</sup> RATS (3 weeks later)
  - If no improvement, HOH referral
  - HOH referral letter sent to parent/carers
  - HOH and PCY discuss appropriate support pathway (e.g. attendance report, EHP etc)
  - HOH meets parent / carer and student & considers further action
  - Meetings logged and saved to student file. Copy to PCY
  - Attendance Officer / HOH administrator to produce agreed letters
  
- 4<sup>th</sup> RATS ( 3 weeks later)
  - If no improvement, refer to EWO for 6 weeks case work
  - EWO meets with parent and attendance plan put in place
  
- 5<sup>th</sup> RATS (3 weeks later)
  - Further parental meeting with attendance contract with House SLT link or WKT
  
- 6<sup>th</sup> RATS (3 weeks later)
  - No improvement – WSCC PEI referral

All actions discussed and monitored by HOH & EWO at RATS review meeting 2 weeks after the RATS meeting.

# The Regis School Fixed Penalty Notice Process (FPN)



# The Regis School Fixed Penalty Notice Process (FPN) for unauthorised requests for absence from learning

