



Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure Template

Local Procedure Title	Attendance
Site	Ridgeway School
Local Procedure date	09/2025
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Local Procedure Author(s)	Penny King
Local Procedure Ratification	Checked and Approved by: Gail Prince

1. Aims

Ridgeway School believes that regular attendance at school is vital to young people achieving their full potential academically, socially, and personally.

We understand that individual learners may have had a disrupted education prior to joining Ridgeway and that they may require a phased transition into school to be successful. Our goal is to support fulltime attendance within 6 weeks. While we appreciate that some young people with Autism suffer from anxiety that may affect their school attendance, our aim in partnership with parents is that all our learners will ultimately attend school on a full-time, regular basis to take full advantage of the opportunities that are open to them.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence (attendance of less than 90% of timetabled sessions).
- Ensuring every learner has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

2. Legislation and Guidance

Our attendance procedure meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This procedure also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.



3. School Procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all learners are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all learners must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every learner is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Not required to attend as not of compulsory school age

The school day starts at 08.45, although the registration period is between 8.45 and 9.30am as children arrive at staggered times mainly by taxi.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 08.30 or as soon as practically possible. Parents / Carers should either contact the school by phone Tel: 01793557190 or send a message via email to ridgewayschool@aspriscs.co.uk. The decision to authorise absence rests with the Head of school. The reasons must be clear and acceptable. Ridgeway recognises that working with parents to identify reasons for absence, trends and early decline in attendance will help support our learners maintain high attendance. Staff phoning about poor attendance will ask sensitive but probing questions to support all the family in the process.

In this example one can see how small amounts of lost time can build.

90% attendance means that a learner is absent from lessons for the equivalent of one half day every week.

- *If a learner had 90% in a school year they have missed the equivalent of four whole weeks (a month).*



- *If the learner continued this pattern over five years they will miss the equivalent of about one half of a school year.*
- *Habits of poor attendance and lateness in school are often repeated in working life which is why employers ask the school for such information as part of references.*

On the rare occasions where the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (at the headteacher's discretion) and parents will be notified of this in advance.

When admin staff are unable to contact parents/carers to ascertain reasons for absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and this will be reported to the safeguarding team.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary e.g. attend school in the morning and leave for the medical appointment in the afternoon. We understand that this is more challenging for learners who travel a long distance to school.

Parents / carers should notify the school in advance of medical or dental appointments by email or letter.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A learner who arrives late but before the register has closed at 09:30 in the morning will be marked as late, using an L code.

A learner who arrives after the register is closed will be marked using a U code (arrived in school after registration closed) This means they are present in school but the session is classed as an absence. (Gov. guidelines)

A learner who has a personalised timetable (either a temporary transition timetable or an adjusted threshold for medical reasons) and is expected to arrive after 9.30 will be marked using a C2 code.

In exceptional circumstances, such as taxi/transport issues, the Headteacher can authorise a change of code, in which case they will be marked as late but present. Where transport issues repeatedly result in lateness, we will notify the parent / carer and the relevant Local Authority transport team.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not, and identify the correct attendance code to use. If the school has not been notified of the reason for absence by 09:30, we will attempt to contact parents/carers by phone. If the child has poor attendance and regular patterns, we will also notify the Local Authority.



3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance will be reported to parents /carers in the written termly report that is issued at 3 points in the year, and at annual reviews.

3.7 Lesson attendance

Teachers will monitor and record attendance at each of their lessons. Teachers are responsible for managing the learners throughout this lesson. When a learner fails to attend the lesson, or leaves prior to the end of the lesson, this will be managed by the teacher and LSA i.e. they locate the learner and support them and/or engage support to locate the learner.

3.8 Adjusted thresholds

Where a learner has a particular physical or mental health condition that warrants an adjustment of attendance expectations. these are accommodated. These learners' attendance is monitored in line with our knowledge of the learner's particular circumstances and guidance from outside professionals. We take actions in line with their adjusted thresholds in the same way as for all other learners.

4. Attendance monitoring

Our teachers and admin will monitor learner absence on a daily basis. Parents /Carers are expected to call or message the school before 08.30 if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). If a learner's absence extends beyond 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents/carers, a learner's absence continues to rise, we will notify the Local Authority. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a learner's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the learner will be classified as a persistent absentee. Learner's attendance data is reported each term to parents via reports and annually via reviews. Our attendance is recorded within our governance reports. We use a secure online management information system to record and store attendance data. Senior leaders regularly track and analyse attendance data of individuals and cohorts and identify concerns and trends. We utilise the data to inform the need for interventions and support.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Governance

Scott Preston (Regional Director) is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on, at least, a termly basis. They will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this procedure.

5.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher, Gail Prince, is responsible for ensuring this procedure is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governance. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual learners.

5.3 Attendance Team

Administrative staff:

Our Senior Administrator will be responsible for checking registers twice daily; liaising with parents /carers and tutors regarding absence and lateness; recording attendance data provided by alternative providers; monitoring attendance data at the school and individual learner level;



preparing data for weekly attendance meetings; and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher.

Teachers:

Teachers will be responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis on the school information management system. Teachers are authorised to use the following codes: /, and N. Where the reason for absence is known, the teacher should use N and enter the reason for absence in the comment box. The administrative staff will identify the correct code for the situation. Teachers are also responsible for liaising with learners and parents / carers regarding attendance. Teachers are responsible for informing the Senior Administrator and SLT of any learner who is not present for registration without a known reason.

6. Letters

- Meetings will be held regularly with parents/carers and a member of SLT to decide how to proceed with low attendance
- Parents will be sent a letter confirming concerns, support and subsequent actions
- If the absence persists, further letters will be sent advising how the school can help to get the young person back into the school setting
- Learners persistently below 90% will have an action plan. Action plans will be updated regularly and shared with parents/carers

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and is approved by the Regional Director.

Local Procedure Review History:

Date Reviewed	Reviewer	Summary of revisions