



**Five
Rivers®**

**FIVE RIVERS
CHILD CARE LTD**

**Attendance
Policy &
Procedure –

Field Gate**

'Five Rivers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'

Policy Owner	Head Teacher
Authoriser	Head of Education
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1. Attendance Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

- Poor attendance disadvantages children. We aim to ensure that the children in our school attend regularly and on time, and where this is not the case, staff follow a staged procedure to encourage consistent attendance.
- While 100% attendance is clearly the ideal, in many cases legitimate illness or other factors can prevent it. Such attendance where it occurs, is clearly excellent. On the other hand, attendance, which falls below 90%, where a child is known to be in reasonable health and there are no extenuating circumstances, is poor and should give cause for concern. To ascertain the levels of individual children's attendance we have a set of procedures, outlined below, and where there is cause for concern, appropriate action will be taken.
- Pupils are expected to attend the school for 190 days a year. Pupils should be ready to start their day at the time set on their individual timetable. Social workers and carers are expected to request permission in advance for any absence other than illness and the school has every right to refuse it. Each request will be assessed on an individual basis.
- We are obliged to make our attendance figures known to legitimate agencies by completing appropriate returns.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

The below table sets out a number of terms and definitions used within this document:

Term	Definition
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead

1.3 Data Protection

- Five Rivers supports the objectives of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) & Data Protection Act 2018 and other legislation relating to Data Processing, including the Human Rights Act 1998, Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, and the Freedom of Information

Act 2000. Five Rivers Child Care has a statutory obligation to process personal data in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR & Data Protection Act, 2018¹.

- Every member of Five Rivers Child Care has an obligation to ensure that the information they process (use) is collected, maintained, and disclosed in accordance with the principles of the GDPR & Data Protection Act, 2018 and the Five Rivers Data Protection Policy.

1.4 Disclosure of Information

- Any use or disclosure of information held within Five Rivers Child Care, without there being a legitimate purpose or legal basis, will comply with the requirements of the GDPR & Data Protection Act, 2018.

2. Attendance Procedure

2.1 Responsibility of the Head Teacher

- The Head Teacher has initial responsibility for expecting good attendance and punctuality from the children in their care and reward systems are put in to place to promote good attendance, keeping the register correctly and refer any concerns to the parent/carer and Head of Education.
- If attendance becomes a problem, a letter will be sent initially to the parent or carer. Following this, if absence is still of a concern, a meeting will be put in place to discuss issues and possible solutions.
- For a child on an integrated care and education package daily handovers take place with the carers and attendance is a prioritised agenda item. If the attendance of an individual is of concern, a formal meeting will be held with the manager and the young person to discuss the appropriate interventions necessary. For a day pupil, if attendance becomes a problem, a letter will be sent to the parent/carer and a meeting will be put in place to discuss issues and possible solutions. The social workers will also be informed in all instances.
- On a monthly basis, attendance figures are sent to the Head of Education for data collection. A check is made that all absences have a reason entered. Any letters regarding absence are kept with the register/pupil file. Reports are sent to parents/carers each term and a monthly report is written for the Senior Management team, including attendance data.
- Upon returning to school after a period of absence, it is important that all adults involved with that child are positive and welcoming. Some may need sympathetic handling on their return.

2.2 Registers

As a legal document, a register is kept electronically by the School Business Administrator and completed each morning and afternoon. Whilst on a 1ACE or FGS role staff will register the students no later than 30 minutes after the session is due to end. Due to the nature of the school, and 1ACE service the whereabouts of the young people are always known that they are timetabled to be with school staff, in the school or on their base, and attendance is confirmed at partner provisions. There is a logbook in every residential home which records this detail for an integrated package student.

2.3 Authorised Absence

These activities are treated as equivalent to present for statistical purposes

- Educational off-site (Not dual registration)
- Attending interview with prospective employers or another school
- Approved sports activities

- Educational visit/school journey
- A part time induction timetable
- A part time placement

2.4 Unauthorised Absence

We will use our professional judgment in deciding whether or not to authorise an absence. Clearly, where there is a definite pattern of non-attendance or where the explanation for absence is unsatisfactory, investigations into reasons for absence will be conducted.

2.5 Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should discuss with parents/carers the reason for the child missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

Our school has safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and recently Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, in respect of our pupils, therefore we will investigate any unexplained absences.

If there are concerns with a child missing from education, the DSL must be informed to decide on the next step.

2.6 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/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents and carers should notify the school as soon as possible of a medical or dental appointment and this will be recorded on the register as `M`.

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.

2.7 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

2.8. Study Leave

Study leave should only ever be granted to pupils in year 11. It will be done on an individual basis in consultation with the placing authority and school will be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

All pupils are different and have different requirements and preferences when preparing for examinations. In some cases, alternatives to study leave will be organised, particularly for those pupils who do not have the skills, or are not inclined, to make the best use of unsupervised and unstructured revision time. Study leave is also a chance for pupils to develop their independent study which will help them when they move to post-16 school, where a self-study approach is commonly used. Study leave will not be applicable to all year 11 pupils as not everyone will sit a formal exam.

Recording the attendance of pupils on study leave

Y11 pupils granted study leave will be marked on the attendance register as an authorised absence using code S.

2.9 Persistent Absence

Pupil absence is collected weekly and monitored formally each half term, highlighting those whose attendance falls below 90%. For those below 90%, a letter is sent to the parents/carers to inform them that their child's absence is causing concern.

2.10 Annual Holidays

Annual holidays will not be authorised in term time, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

2.11 Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher and Head of Education are responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, keeping the register correctly, and for referring any concerns to relevant stakeholders