



FIVE RIVERS CHILD CARE LTD

Attendance Policy & Procedure – Clannad

'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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Table of Contents

1.	Attendance Policy	2
1.1	Policy Statement.....	2
1.2	Terms and Definitions.....	2
1.3	Data Protection.....	2
1.4	Disclosure of Information	3
2.	Attendance Procedure	4
2.1	Responsibility of the headteacher.....	4
2.2	Registers	4
2.3	Authorised Absence	4
2.4	Unauthorised Absence	4
2.5	Missing from Education	4

1. Attendance Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

- 1.1.1 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.
- 1.1.2 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.
- 1.1.3 Pupils are expected to attend school for 190 days a year. Pupils must be ready to start their lessons at 9.00 am. 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.
- 1.1.4 We are obliged to make our attendance figures known to legitimate agencies by completing appropriate returns.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

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

Term	Definition
Nil.	

1.3 Data Protection

- 1.3.1 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.

- 1.3.2 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

- 1.4.1 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 headteacher

- 2.1.1 The headteacher has initial responsibility for expecting good attendance and punctuality from the children in their care and reward systems are put in place to promote good attendance, keeping the register correctly and refer any concerns to the Head of Education.
- 2.1.2 If attendance becomes a problem a meeting will be put in place to discuss issues and possible solutions.
- 2.1.3 Daily handovers take place with the carers and attendance is a prioritised agenda item. If the attendance of an individual is to be of concern, a formal meeting will be held with the manager and the young person to discuss appropriate interventions necessary. The social workers and/or parents will also be informed.

2.2 Registers

- 2.2.1 As a legal document, a register is kept on an Excel spreadsheet and completed each morning and afternoon. We will close the register after the first lesson in the morning and after the first lesson in the afternoon. Due to the nature of the school, the whereabouts of the young people are known at all times. There is a logbook in the residential home which records this detail.

2.3 Authorised Absence

- 2.3.1 These activities are treated as equivalent to present for statistical purposes
 - Educational off-site (Not dual registration)
 - Attending interview with another school
 - Approved sports activities
 - Educational visit/school journey

2.4 Unauthorised Absence

- 2.4.1 We will use our professional judgment in deciding whether to authorise an absence. Clearly, where there is a definite pattern of non-attendance or where the explanation for absence is unsatisfactory, sanctions will be put in place.

2.5 Missing from Education

- 2.5.1 A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should discuss with residential staff 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 their going missing in future. At Clannad, the children reside in the home which is on the same premises as the school and so this is unlikely to happen.
- 2.5.2 As a school, we have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and recently released Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, in respect of our pupils, therefore we will investigate any unexplained absences.
- 2.5.3 If there are concerns with a child missing from education, the DSL must be informed to decide on the next step.

- 2.5.4 All incidents of a child going missing from education will be recorded and shared with multi-agency partners as required. A copy of this will also be recorded in the child's education folder.

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 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. The school should be notified in advance by email or through handovers about medical or dental appointments.

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.

Lateness and punctuality

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

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Procedures

The teacher has initial responsibility for expecting good attendance and punctuality from the children in their care and reward systems are put in place to promote good attendance.

If attendance becomes a problem a meeting will be put in place to discuss issues and possible solutions.

Daily handovers take place with the carers and attendance is a prioritised agenda item. If the attendance of an individual is to be of concern, a formal meeting will be held with the manager and the young person to discuss appropriate interventions necessary. The social workers and/or parents will also be informed.

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. Reports are sent to stakeholders each half 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.

Persistent Absence

Pupil absence is collected weekly and monitored formally monthly. For those whose attendance is a concern, carers and if needed social worker will be informed. Attendance is a key priority and discussed regularly in meetings.

ANNUAL HOLIDAYS

Annual holidays will not be authorised in term time, except in exceptional circumstances.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The headteacher is responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, keeping the register correctly, and for referring any concerns to relevant stakeholders