



Attendance and Absence Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy covers the entire School, including the Early Years.
- 1.2. Whilst Nursery pupils are not yet of statutory school age, regular attendance is expected in line with this policy.
- 1.3. Good attendance is a learned behaviour and setting this at a young age is very important. The Department for Education (DfE) advise that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attendance. The foundation of securing good attendance is that School is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.
- 1.4. The School seeks to build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. We see education as a partnership between the family and the school and we look to parents/guardians to support this objective.

2. Aims

- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefit of good attendance.
- To ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School
- To prioritise, and where possible improve, attendance and punctuality across the School, and reduce absence
- To set out the steps the School will take to address circumstances where attendance does not meet expectations.

3. Attendance Expectations

- 3.1. All pupils are required to be in school at 8.30 am. Registration is taken each morning at 8.35am. On days when assembly is held, registers must be completed especially

promptly after this time to enable staff and pupils to attend assembly. Registers are reviewed at 9.00am after which unexplained absences are promptly followed up. Pupils who arrive in their classroom after 8.35am must either go to, or be taken by their parents/guardians, to Reception where they will be registered as Late.

- 3.2. Registration is taken again for the afternoon session. Teachers must have completed registers by 2.10pm.
- 3.3. The school day ends at 3.30pm or 4pm according to age although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities or for prep. Pupils are normally expected to leave by 6pm.
- 3.4. Pupils are expected to attend school in accordance with their timetable unless absence has been authorised.

4. Planned Absence

- 4.1. Wherever possible, routine appointments should be made outside of school hours however it is understood that in certain circumstances (e.g. hospital appointments) this is not always possible.
- 4.2. Requests for authorised absence must be made in writing or by email to the Headmaster (headmaster@ripleycourt.co.uk) and reach the school at least 3 days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone or email the School before 8.30am).
- 4.3. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Headmaster at least 3 days in advance. The Headmaster will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- 4.4. Advance permission for absence can only be given by the Headmaster.

5. Unplanned Absence

- 5.1. If a pupil is unwell, parents/guardians should telephone or email admin@ripleycourt.co.uk before 8.30am on the first day of absence and each day thereafter unless the date of return can be predicted. (e.g. where a case of vomiting precludes a return to school within 48 hours).
- 5.2. The School may request confirmation of the absence via email for its records.
- 5.3. The School will always telephone the parent/guardian in the event of an unexplained absence as part of its safeguarding responsibility. The School holds at least two separate telephone numbers for each child to ensure that prompt and effective contact can be made.

6. Monitoring Attendance and Absence

- 6.1. The Headmaster is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in School and is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and School Attendance Champion. He can be contacted via email at headmaster@ripleycourt.co.uk or by telephone on 01483 225217.
- 6.2. Attendance is monitored on a daily basis with class teachers highlighting issues around absence to the Head of Little Court (including Nursery) or Head of Upper Court (both of whom are also trained Designated Safeguarding Leads(DSLs)) as relevant. Issues with absence are identified promptly, logged into CPOMs and discussed with the Headmaster, and appropriate intervention made.
- 6.3. Where absence may also give rise to a safeguarding concern, this should also be reported in accordance with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- 6.4. Absence records for individual pupils, or groups such as individual classes or year groups, will be analysed to identify any patterns of absence so that early intervention can be provided.
- 6.5. Where attendance for any pupil falls below 90% this will be logged in CPOMs and reviewed at the weekly pastoral meeting. (See Appendix 3 for further details) Form tutors will arrange a meeting with parents to discuss attendance where there is a concern, and will log this in CPOMS. Depending on the outcome, further escalation may take place in the form of further communication between the School and parents/guardians and/or the Local Authority in line with the School's overall safeguarding and legal responsibilities.
- 6.6. The School will work with individual pupils and their families to understand their specific barriers to attendance. Where required, the School will endeavour to put in place alternative strategies to support attendance.
- 6.7. A formal monthly report is produced detailing attendance and absence for each pupil. This is reviewed by the Headmaster. Half termly whole school reports will also be run and shared with the Head of Little Court (including Nursery) and the Head of Upper Court, both of whom are DSLs.
- 6.8. Statistical reports are produced for the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis. Summary level written reports are provided to the Education and Pastoral Committee which includes 3 Governors. Should any significant issues emerge, detailed reports would be provided.

7. Sharing Attendance and Absence Data with 3rd parties.

- 7.1. All Schools must make a return to the Local Authority when a pupil has failed to attend school regularly (excluding attendance codes D, K, V or B) or has missed 10 consecutive school days or more with their absence being recorded in the register in ways statistically recorded as unauthorised absence.

- 7.2. All Schools must make a return to the Local Authority where a pupil is absent using code I and the School has reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been, unable to attend School because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.
- 7.3. Where a pupil is a Child Looked After (CLA), the School has additional duties to share absence data with the team around the child in accordance with specific safeguarding arrangements.
- 7.4. Where the School is approached for attendance data by another educational institution, the School will share this data but will discuss this with parents/guardians in advance, where doing so may have an adverse impact on the pupil.

Compiled by: Headmaster	Revision Number: 7 (Autumn 2025)
Approved by: Education & Pastoral Committee	Next Revision date: Autumn Term 2026

Revision History Table

Revision Number	Section/Paragraph number	Amendments
7 – Autumn 2025	Whole document	Changes to role titles for Headmaster, Head of Little Court (including Nursery) and removal of reference to Headmistress and Deputy Head.
	1.1 & 1.2	New
	8.4	Added reference to guardians.

Appendix 1 – Important Contact Details

To register an unplanned absence	Rachel Tipping / Sarah Fulford Email : admin@ripleycourt.co.uk Telephone : 01483 225217
To request an authorised absence or support with attendance issues	Gavin Ryan – Headmaster & DSL Email : headmaster@ripleycourt.co.uk

Appendix 2 – Absence Codes and Definitions

KEY	Present	<i>The pupil is physically in school when the register is taken.</i>
	Approved Education Activity (Present)	<i>The school is responsible for making or approving the arrangements. If none of these codes applies (e.g. privately arranged work experience is outside Code W) the correct code may be Code C. See also definition of “Approved Educational Activity” below.</i>
	Authorised absence	<i>Independent schools are not subject to Regulation 11 (which limits the circumstances where absence can be authorised) but should be mindful of the expectation that Code C should only be used in exceptional circumstances (and use the appropriate authorised absence code where available).</i>
	Unauthorised absence	<i>10 days’ continuous unauthorised absence must be reported to the local authority.</i>
	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>These codes sit outside the attendance statistics.</i>

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	NOTES
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
B	Any other approved educational activity (not sporting activity or work experience)	Present - Approved educational activity	<i>Record the nature of the activity. Must be off-site, of an educational nature, take place during the attendance session, and be physically supervised by someone the school considers to have appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge. The school must have approved the pupil’s attendance at the activity and have arrangements in place to ensure safeguarding, welfare and for the provider to notify any absence to the school.</i>

K	Education provision arranged by the local authority	Present - Approved educational activity	<i>Record the nature of the provision e.g. home tutoring, approved framework for alternative provision, blended learning.</i>
P	Sporting activity	Present - Approved educational activity	<i>Must be a sporting activity carried out by the pupil and meet all the requirements as for 'B' above. Approval must be granted by the Headmistress in advance.</i>
V	Educational visit or trip	Present - Approved educational activity	<i>Must be arranged by or on behalf of the school and take place during the attendance session. If a pupil was due to attend a visit, but does not, the relevant absence code should be used instead.</i>
W	Work experience	Present - Approved educational activity	<i>Must be arranged by the school/LA as part of the pupil's education and meet all the requirements as for 'B' above.</i>
C	Absent with leave (exceptional circumstances)	Authorised absence	<i>Use this code for any absence with leave not covered by another leave or absence code. Should not be granted (and in state schools must not be granted) unless there are exceptional circumstances</i>
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence	<i>Supported by a relevant licence or exemption (see guidance for more details)</i>
C2	Part-time timetable for compulsory school age pupil	Authorised absence	<i>In exceptional circumstances e.g. due to a medical condition. Should not be used to manage behaviour. Must be agreed with parent, be part of wider support plan, have regular review dates, have a proposed end date (shortest time necessary).</i>
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	<i>Suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds where their name is still entered in the admissions register. Must not be used for exclusion for non-payment of fees.</i>
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence	<i>Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.</i>

			<i>Where a pupil is absent for at least 15 days, whether consecutive or not, a return must be made to the Local Authority.</i>
J1	Interview for employment / admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence	<i>Applies only to interviews (e.g. not open days). Transition days at other schools would be recorded under 'B' (if conditions met) or 'C' if not. Must take place during the session for which absence recorded.</i>
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	<i>Parents should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours</i>
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	<i>Day set by the religious body the parents belong to (not parents themselves) which would expect parents to stay away from employment. If the religious body sets a single day then only 1 days should be recorded 'R' with any additional time given recorded under 'C'.</i>
S	Studying for a public examination	Authorised absence	<i>Guidance says study leave should not be granted by default and should be used sparingly.</i>
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence	<i>Pupil is a mobile child (no fixed abode) and their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them.</i>
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence	<i>Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively if the parent does not apply in advance.</i>
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence	<i>Where the reason has not been established before the register closes. If no reason established within 5 school days this must be amended to 'O'.</i>
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence	<i>Where no reason is established or where the school is not satisfied that the reason would be recorded using an authorised absence code.</i>
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	<i>Pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of the session. The attendance policy must state how long the register will remain open (not more than 30mins).</i>

D	Dual registered at another school	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Pupil is attending another school (e.g. hospital school) at which they are registered.</i>
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Only where the LA has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and has not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.</i>
X	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to attend	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Where the pupil's timetable does not require them to attend. If absent when timetabled to attend the appropriate absence code must be used.</i>
Y1	Transport normally provided not available	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Where the pupil does not live within walking distance and transport provided by LA or school is not available.</i>
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Due to national, local or international emergency.</i>
Y3	Part of the school premises closed	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Part of the school is unavoidably out of use and the pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in the part in use.</i>
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Must not be used for any planned closure e.g. holidays</i>
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>E.g. in police detention, remanded to youth detention or under sentence of detention. If serving a community-based sentence use Y7,</i>
Y6	In accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise use 'I') but to do so would be contrary to government guidance or legislation</i>

Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances	<i>Record the nature of the unavoidable cause. Only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. This code should be used for temporary exclusion due to non-payment of fees</i>
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	To enable schools to set up registers in advance of the pupil joining to ease administrative burdens.
#	Planned whole school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	E.g. School holidays, bank holidays, weekends, inset days

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 Section 6(4) define an approved educational activity is either:-

(a) an activity which takes place outside the school premises and which is –

(i) approved by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school;

(ii) of an educational nature, including work experience under section 560 of the Education Act 1996 (1) and a sporting activity; and

(iii) supervised by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of head teacher of the school; or

(b) attendance at another school at which the pupil is a registered pupil.

Appendix 3 – Calculating Absence and Attendance

- Attendance is to be calculated using the register codes /, \, L, K, V, W. The number of sessions (morning and afternoon will count as 2 sessions) where a pupil is marked with an attendance code is to be divided by the number of sessions where attendance was possible (e.g. where a pupil is timetabled to attend and the school is not closed) to calculate a percentage. This percentage is expected to be 90% or above.
- When reviewing attendance which falls below the expected level of 90%, careful review of the use of codes for Approved Educational Activity B and P and Authorised Absence (C, C1, C2, E, I, J1, M, R, S, T) must be made.
- Where illness (I) and/or medical (M) codes are a factor in bringing the attendance percentage below the level of 90%, further analysis may be required to consider what further interventions may be required to ensure the pupil receives an appropriate level of education.

Worked Examples

	Pupil A	Pupil B	Pupil C
Day 1	Λ	Λ	II
Day 2	Λ	Λ	II
Day 3	Λ	Λ	/I
Day 4	L\	Λ	U\
Day 5	Λ	Λ	Λ
Day 6	V V	Λ	II
Day 7	Λ	Λ	M\
Day 8	Λ	Λ	Λ
Day 9	L\	Λ	Λ
Day 10	Λ	Λ	Λ
Day 11	Λ	P P	II
Day 12	Λ	P P	II
Day 13	Λ	P P	U\
Day 14	L\	Λ	II
Day 15	Λ	Λ	Λ
Day 16	Λ	C C	Λ

Day 17	^	^	^
Day 18	^	P P	^
Day 19	L\	P P	^
Day 20	^	^	^
Attendance	38/40	28/40	24/40
Attendance %	95%	70%	60%

Pupil A – has attendance above expectations however has been late for registration once each week (nominally Thursday). Is there a change to his personal circumstances where getting to school on time on these days is particularly difficult?

Pupil B – has attendance below expectations however has been granted 5 days (10 sessions) absence to attend sports training events and 1 day (2 sessions) to attend his sister's graduation ceremony. Staff have reviewed his attendance over a longer period of time and have considered his academic and pastoral position. The pupil is making good progress and so no cause for concern at this time.

Pupil C – his attendance is significantly below expectations. ($11/20 = 55\%$ for week 1 & 2). His tutor has noticed that he is often off sick on the first 2 days of each week and teachers have reported that Pupil C is getting behind in some topics. In week 3 the problem is worsening and the tutor contacts the family. Interventions are put in place and by week 4 the pupil is in school for all sessions.

Appendix 4 – Quick reference guide for staff

Persistent Absence Tracking Process

- All pupils are required to be in school before 8.30am.
- The school day ends at 3.30pm or 4pm according to age although many pupils remain later to take part in extra –curricular activities under the supervision of a member of staff, or for prep.
- Pupils are normally expected to leave by 6pm.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for trip or visit a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to parents/guardians in advance.
- Parent/guardian requests for absence must be made in writing or by email to the Headmistress (headmistress@ripleycourt.co.uk) and reach the school at least 3 days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8.30am).
- Parent/guardian requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Headmistress at least 3 days in advance.
- For pupils who are ill, parents/guardians should telephone the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence. Tutors/Teachers should pass on any messages from parents to admin@ripleycourt.co.uk for action.
- Please pass any letters from parents/guardians regarding absences to Reception so these can be scanned and kept with registers.
- Reception will make initial enquiries regarding unexplained absences. If contact cannot be made with a parent/guardian by 09:30 or a suitable explanation is not given for absence, this will be promptly escalated to a member of SLT.

