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1. Aims and Objectives

At Riverside School, we strive to promote an ethos and culture where each student feels valued and secure, which encourages good attendance. Regular and punctual attendance at school is crucial: students need to be in school and on time for the maximum number of days and hours if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Good attendance habits have a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of students and will be maximised through an effective partnership between students, their parents/carers and the school.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement;
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically;
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with;
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying;
- Regular attenders find the transition easier between age phases / key stages / primary-high school.

According to the UK Department for Education, *“a persistently absent child is one who misses school for at least 10% of the time.”*

This policy sets out the expectations and procedures to promote and ensure a high level of attendance for all students. It makes clear the framework of responsibilities and processes so that all staff, students and parents/guardians are fully aware of the actions necessary to ensure attendance meets this level.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- ensure that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence or lateness;
- create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued;
- raise the awareness of the parents/guardians, as well as of the students, of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education, from Early Years to the High School.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues and responsibilities among all staff, students and parents/guardians;
- equipping students with the life skills needed to take responsibility for their good attendance and punctuality, as appropriate to their age and development;
- fostering a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued.
- consistently monitoring attendance and implementing procedures for the identification, reporting and review of cases of poor attendance or persistent lateness;
- maintaining effective means of communication between parents/guardians, students and Staff.

2. Attendance Requirements

Regular and punctual attendance is required of students on all school days. Teachers, staff, and parents should work together to ensure that students miss as little school as possible.

Riverside School aims for an attendance rate of 95% or higher. This means that students are expected to be present for at least 95% of the school days in an academic year.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student’s absence disrupts teaching routines and may consequently affect the learning of others in the same class. Where significant absence is impacting on student progress, the school reserves the right to review an individual’s level of attainment and decide on whether transition into the next school year is appropriate.

Attendance records are closely monitored on a termly basis. A record of attendance falling below 90% is cause for concern, while attendance below 80% is considered critical and will prompt an official review by the school's senior leadership. In cases of consistently poor attendance without reasonable documentation of extenuating circumstances, could affect the student's ability to progress to the next year level, and may need to involve OSPOD (Social Care), which.

3. Legislation and Guidance

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

(<https://www.msmt.cz/dokumenty/skolsky-zakon-ve-zneni-ucinnem-ode-dne-1-7-2023>)

In the Czech Republic, mandatory school attendance begins in the school year for children who have reached 6 years of age on 31 August before the given school year. School attendance is compulsory for 9 years, usually between the ages of 6 and 15.

Compulsory school attendance applies to citizens of the Czech Republic and to citizens of another member state of the European Union who stay in the territory of the Czech Republic for more than 90 days. In addition, compulsory school attendance applies to other foreigners who are authorised to reside on the territory of the Czech Republic permanently or temporarily for a period longer than 90 days, and to participants in proceedings for the granting of international protection.

In the Czech Republic, parents are obliged to:

- make sure their child attends school;
- enrol their child in elementary school when he/she reaches six years of age
- be personally involved in important discussions about their child's education
- inform the school about any changes concerning their child's health
- document the reasons for the child's absence from classes in accordance with the the school rules
- notify the school of the data that are essential for the course of education or the safety of the child, and changes in this data.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). It also refers to: [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

4. Absence and Punctuality (Instructions for parents/guardians & students)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school on time every day and for every timetabled lesson
- Notify the relevant school office (call or email) before 8:15am (or as soon as practically possible) on the first day of the unplanned absence, and each subsequent day of absence. State the reason for the absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Ensure that, where possible, medical, dental, and other appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
- Provide medical evidence to support illness if requested by the school. Medical evidence can take the form of a doctor's note/certificate, prescriptions, appointment cards, or other appropriate form of evidence. The school will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. Here are some general guidelines for when the school may request medical evidence from a parent:
 - when a student has frequent or extended absences due to illness
 - if a student has a chronic health condition that requires ongoing medical treatment or accommodations
 - In cases where a student requires an extended medical leave from school due to a serious illness or injury
 - If there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness
- Seek permission from the relevant head of school (either Principal of Primary, Principal of High

- School, Head of Early Years) should they wish to take their children out of school during term time.
- Provide the school with relevant and up-to-date contact numbers - including emergency contact details.

Students are expected to:

- attend school (and each timetabled lesson) every day on time.
- make up the work they have missed due to absence.

Punctuality:

Lack of punctuality is deemed unacceptable. When a child arrives late and misses the beginning of the day or the start of a lesson, they risk missing crucial learning opportunities and the chance to connect with their class teacher or form tutor to receive essential information and updates for the day. Moreover, tardiness can disrupt ongoing lessons, potentially causing embarrassment for the child and potentially fostering a culture of absenteeism.

5. Informing the school of absence and lateness (procedures for parents):

Parents are required to contact the relevant school office by email or phone as soon as they know their child will not attend or will be late for school. This will be recorded in iSAMS by reception staff and forwarded to the relevant tutor or teacher.

If the school has not been notified then the parents will be contacted by email from 09:00 requesting the reason for absence.

Reporting an unplanned absence (instructions for parents):

If your child's absence is due to illness or an unforeseen circumstance, please provide a brief explanation, such as illness or a family emergency, to assist us in maintaining accurate records.

We ask that you do this before 8:15 am on the day of the absence, and in one of the following ways:

Early Years (Nursery & Reception):

- **Notify the class teacher and the office**
 - Email: ey@riversideschool.cz
 - Telephone: 245 005 095

Primary School (Years 1-6):

- **Notify the class teacher and the office**
 - Email: ps@riversideschool.cz
 - Telephone: 224 325 183

Junior High (Years 7-9):

- **Notify the office**
 - Email: jh@riversideschool.cz
 - Telephone: 245 005 040

Senior High (Years 10-13):

- **Notify the office**
 - Email: sh@riversideschool.cz
 - Telephone: 245 005 045

6. Long Term Absence or Recurring Absence

When notified in advance that students will be absent, or likely to be absent, for an extended period of time, the school will ask teachers to provide necessary work to be completed via Google Classroom or by email. The Classroom Teacher (Primary) or Head of Year (Junior and Senior High) will organise and oversee this process.

7. Attendance at Physical Education Lessons

Physical Education (PE) is a mandatory lesson for all students. If a student is unable to participate in PE, they must provide a written explanation from parents or a medical practitioner. The PE department will monitor this, with the school office's support. Non-participating students are expected to attend and observe the session. In Junior and Senior High School, students with medical notes should bring their PE kits to actively support the lesson (e.g. as umpires or coaches). Students with long-term or chronic conditions will be given a research task related to their PE class. In general, if a student is well enough to attend school, they are expected to participate in PE.

8. Attendance at Whole-School Events and Curriculum Enrichment Activities

Attendance at Whole-School Events and Curriculum Enrichment Activities is mandatory. These thoughtfully planned experiences provide students with unique opportunities to build community bonds, foster team spirit, and engage in real-world experiences. Participating in curriculum enrichment activities allows students to spend valuable learning time in new environments, forging meaningful relationships while extending their academic skills into authentic, real-life settings beyond the conventional classroom, ensuring a well-rounded and enriching educational journey. It is an expectation that all students participate in the whole-school events and curriculum enrichment activities.

9. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised Absence from School

An absence is classified as 'Authorised' when the school has either given approval in advance for a student to be away, or a student has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/guardian. Authorised absences from school will normally only be given for sickness and health reasons and the parent has telephoned or emailed the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised - parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Refer to the "Authorised Absence" codes defined in Appendix 1: Attendance Codes.

Unauthorised Absence from School

An absence is classified as 'Unauthorised' when a student is away from school without the permission of the school. If a student is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent, the absence is unauthorised. Refer to the "Unauthorised Absence" codes defined in Appendix 1: Attendance Codes.

Approval for term-time absence

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as situations or events that are rare, unforeseen, and significantly impactful, making it absolutely necessary for a student to be absent from school during term time. These

circumstances may include, but are not limited to, bereavement, family crises, or other compelling situations that disrupt a student's regular attendance and cannot be reasonably avoided or rescheduled.

Planned absences for holidays during term time should be avoided if at all possible. Teachers are not expected to prepare individual work for students who take holidays during term time. Holidays during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and will always be referred to the Principal for approval. Holidays which are not approved by the school will be recorded as 'Holiday (Not agreed)' and are considered unauthorised absences.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. If deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the child, may grant permission for the term-time holiday.

Any request should be made as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

10. Recording Attendance / Registration Procedures

Teaching staff with classroom responsibilities will be allocated an electronic register on the school's information management system (iSAMS) with a list of the current students enrolled in their class.

The school will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register. The register will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

For students in Years 1-13 we will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Early Years

Attendance will be recorded on iSAMS by 09:15 each morning and then again by 13:30 for the afternoon session. Students arriving late will be registered electronically by the office.

- Teachers will mark students in attendance as "**Present**" on the iSAMS register.
 - **Registration Code /:** Present in school / = am
 - AM Register must be submitted by 09:15
 - **Registration Code \:** Present in school \ = pm
 - PM Register must be submitted by 13:30
- Students arriving after these times should be registered through the front office and marked as "**Late**". Students marked as 'Late' are still recorded as present.
- The following procedures apply for students who are absent:
 - Teachers will mark students as 'Absent' with the relevant code (if known)
 - If parents have not notified the school of their child's absence they will be contacted by the office. Once a reason is given, the secretary will update iSAMS with the relevant code.

The Head of Early Years will be informed daily of students who are absent. Parents of these children will be contacted by 10:00 am each day. Any absences that the teaching staff is unaware of will be marked electronically by the secretary.

The Head of Early Years will analyse student attendance and register data, each half-term to review/determine any concerns of lateness of absence.

Primary School

Primary students are expected to be in the relevant classroom at or before the registration times:

- **08:30 Morning Register Taken**
- **13:00 Afternoon Register Taken**

Attendance will be recorded on iSAMS during the first 15 minutes of the school day and the first 15 minutes of the afternoon session. Students arriving late are registered with the office.

- Teachers will mark students in attendance as **“Present”** on the iSAMS register.
 - AM Register must be submitted by 08:45
 - PM Register must be submitted by 13:15
- Students arriving after these times should be registered through the front office and marked as **“Late”**. Students marked as ‘Late’ are still recorded as present.
- The following procedures apply for students who are absent:
 - Teachers will mark students as ‘Absent’ with the relevant code (if known)
 - If parents have not notified the school of their child’s absence they will be contacted by the office. Once a reason is given, the secretary will update iSAMS with the relevant code.
- At **08:45** the list of absentees is printed by the Secretaries. This must be done each morning so the school has a printed record of the register in the event of an evacuation.

The senior leader responsible for attendance (Primary Deputy Principal) is informed daily of students who are absent without authorisation and parents are contacted.

The Primary Leadership will analyse student attendance and register data, each half-term to review/determine any concerns of lateness of absence.

Junior and Senior High

Junior and Senior High students are expected to be in the relevant classroom at or before the start of Tutor Group and each lesson (Period), including double lessons.

- **08:15 Tutor Groups (Morning Register Taken)**
- 08:30 Period 1 Registration
- 09:15 Period 2 Registration
- 10:10 Period 3 Registration
- 10:55 Period 4 Registration
- 11:40 Period 5 Registration / Lunch
- 12:20 Period 6 Registration / Lunch
- 13:05 Period 7 Registration
- 13:50 Period 8 Registration
- 14:35 Period 9 Registration

Attendance will be recorded on iSAMS during the first 10 minutes of the school day (during Tutor Groups) and at the start of each lesson.

- Students who arrive at school after 08:25 should sign in at the school office and the secretaries will update the iSAMS register. They will remain marked ‘Absent’ (with the appropriate code) for the registration periods that they have not attended.
- Teachers must submit the morning register by 08:25. Period registers should be submitted within the first 5 minutes of the lesson.
- Teachers will mark students in attendance as **‘Present’** on the iSAMS register.
- Students arriving after these times should be marked as **‘Late’**. Students marked as ‘Late’ are still recorded as present.
- The following procedures apply for students who are absent:
 - Teachers will mark students as ‘Absent’ with the relevant code (if known and evidence provided). Where the reason for absence is uncertain, the office staff will update the register with the relevant code.

- If parents have not notified the school of their child's absence they will be contacted by the office from 09:00. Once a reason is given, the secretary will update iSAMS with the relevant code.
- At **08:45** the list of absentees is printed by the Secretaries. This must be done each morning so the school has a printed record of the register in the event of an evacuation.

The senior leaders responsible for attendance (SH Deputy Principal-Student Welfare, JH Head of Student Welfare) and relevant Head of Year are informed daily of students who are absent without authorisation and parents are contacted. The Heads of Year check registers weekly to determine any concerns of lateness of absence. These concerns are brought to the weekly Student Welfare meetings and addressed as appropriate.

The Student Welfare Teams will analyse student attendance and register data, each half-term to review/determine any concerns of lateness of absence.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school regularly communicates with parents and caregivers regarding their child's attendance and absence records, providing official reports on a termly basis and as needed on an individual basis.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of Riverside School, we adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) as follows:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of
- safe and effective care, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. The school follows up all safeguarding matters in keeping with its [Child Protection Policy](#).

Patterns of absence may provide further information regarding student well-being and safeguarding and conversations with the DSL may be required.

11. Monitoring Attendance

Early Years

- The class teachers, along with the Head of Early Years monitor the attendance of students.
- Attendance reports will be generated at the conclusion of each half-term.
- An attendance analysis will be completed at the end of each academic school year.

Primary School

- The class teachers, along with Primary Deputy Principal monitor the attendance of students.
- Attendance reports will be generated at the conclusion of each half-term and shared with Primary Principal and Student Welfare Coordinator.
- An attendance analysis will be completed at the end of each academic school year.

Junior and Senior High

- Tutor Teachers, along with the senior leaders responsible for attendance (SH Deputy Principal-Student Welfare, JH Head of Student Welfare) and relevant Head of Year monitor the attendance of students.
- Any attendance concerns to the relevant Head of Year.

- Heads of Year monitor will discuss any issues with the tutor teachers and then report to the Leadership Team where appropriate actions will be discussed e.g. have meetings with students, invite parents in for a meeting.
- The Student Welfare Teams will analyse student attendance and register data.
- An attendance analysis will be completed at the end of each academic school year.

Attendance and Absence Data

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly (half-termly, termly and yearly) across the school and at an individual student level.
- Use the analysis review to identify patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and, where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance. Concerns are addressed by engaging with the relevant individuals or groups of children whose absences might raise alarms.
- Identify students or groups requiring extra attendance support, utilising this analysis to offer targeted assistance to these students and their families.
- Examine historical and emerging attendance and absence trends to devise strategies for addressing these patterns.
- Utilise data for enhancing attendance.
- Deliver routine attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors and other school leaders, enabling discussions with students and families.
- Employ data to monitor and assess the effectiveness of implemented interventions, adapting them as needed and informing future strategies.

Reducing persistent, critical, and severe absence

- Persistent absence: Student misses 10% or more of school without school-approved reasonable cause, raising concerns.
- Critical absence: Student misses 20% or more of school without school-approved reasonable cause, a significant cause for concern.
- Severe absence: Student misses 50% or more of school, regardless of the cause.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of students who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide recommendations for families to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Consider communicating with OSPOD (Social Care)

Senior Leaders Responsible for Attendance

The following staff have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in their respective division of the school.

- Early Years - Head of Early Years
- Primary School - Deputy Principal
- Junior High - Head of Student Welfare
- Senior High - Deputy Principal-Student Welfare

These staff members are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Providing staff training on attendance-related matters
- Collaborating closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to exchange crucial information and devise strategies for engaging and supporting vulnerable children (where there are concerns or patterns of absences)

12. Other Roles and Responsibilities

The School Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Review and approve the Attendance Policy annually
- Holding the Co-Directors to account for the implementation of this policy

The Co-Directors are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

13. Review Process

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the school's leadership. At every review, the policy will be approved by the School Board.

- Date of Review: August 2023
- Date of Next Review: August 2024

14. Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Present Codes		
Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity		
An approved educational activity is where a student is present and supervised at approved off-site educational activity.		
Code	Definition	Scenario
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement
Authorised Absence		
Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness. Medical evidence will be requested to support longer-term illness.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of school time
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Each application is considered on an individual basis. Must be agreed by the Principal.
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	School planned and authorised leave for study. Not for private study or study at student/parent discretion
H	Holiday (Agreed)	Principal will grant authorisation for exceptional circumstances and when the application has been made in advance. Principal's discretion.
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded (serving a suspension) but no alternative provision has been made

Unauthorised Absence		
Code	Definition	Scenario
N	Reason not provided	Used when parents have not provided a reason for absence. All unexplained and unexpected absences will be followed up. The register will be amended when the reason for the student's absence has been established. Code O (Unauthorised Absence) will replace Code N if no reason is given.
A	Unexcused Absence	Absence followed up with parents but no explanation given. (Student "skipping" school)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence.
G	Holiday (Not agreed)	If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday (in advance) but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised.
U	Late (Arrival after the register is closed)	Student arrived at school after the am register is closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day