



REGENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Staff Punctuality, Attendance and Absence Policy

Reviewed by Joe Labuschagne: August 2022
Previous Review: August 2020

Approved by the Board:

Background

The Regent School is a highly professional organisation where high standards of staff punctuality and attendance and a low staff absence rate are regarded as important.

All staff recognise that:

1. Excellent adult/pupil ratios are amongst the things that set us apart from other schools.
2. We can only do the best job we can when we are fully staffed.
3. Unlike some other forms of work, teaching cannot “wait until tomorrow”: the children will still come today.

Regent School staff are expected to imbibe an approach to work which understands that:

1. Unless there is an exceptional reason why we cannot make it, we attend work punctually every day and we remain there for the whole day.
2. It is not acceptable to be “not around” during working hours.
3. There are procedures both for requesting and reporting absence.

Staff at The Regent School also accepts that there is no absolute right to time off during term-time except as laid down in the Conditions of Service Manual. Anything else is entirely discretionary. At all times, the decision of the Headmaster is final and his paramount concern will be the smooth-running of the School. All absence compromises the effectiveness of our educational provision for the children and is subject to the Headmaster’s approval. Just because there is a form on which absence can be requested does not mean it will be granted.

Procedure

All absence should be requested using the proper form and giving the proper notice: presenting an absence request so late that it is a “fait accompli” will render it much less likely to be approved than one which was presented in good time.

Anyone who is taken ill during the day and who needs to go home should get permission from their Head of Department who will then notify the Headmaster. This day will be counted as the first day of the sick leave for recording purposes.

Any member of staff who does not sign in will be deemed absent for that day.

Under certain circumstances, leave of absence will be with pay (See Conditions of Service Manual). Anyone not signed in will be deemed to be absent and an absence report form will be raised. Each day’s absence will be recorded and the onus will be on each individual

member of staff to complete the form, quoting the appropriate part of the Conditions of Service manual if he / she believes the absence should be paid.

If no absence form has been completed within three days after the staff member has returned to work, the absence will be marked as unpaid.

The Admin Office will then perform the following tasks:

1. Upon returning to School after a period of absence, the staff member will collect his/her absence form(s) from the Admin office, sign them and submit them to the Headmaster via his PA for his counter-signature.
2. All absence is thus assumed to be unpaid and the onus is on the individual member of staff to show by use of the Conditions of Service Manual if he/she feels it qualifies to be paid. Necessary documentary evidence should be attached at this stage. Staff should note that this is not an appeal exercise. The Headmaster will then mark the absence sheet as Paid or Unpaid Leave and return it to his PA.
3. The admin staff will then mark any absence that is to be unpaid on a master list to be sent to the Bursar on the 18th day of each month or on the Friday before if 18th falls on a Saturday or Sunday. When 18th falls during a school holiday period, the absence master list is compiled for the Bursar on the admin office first working day after the end of the term for use on the next 18th date.
4. In the case of absence requested in advance, the member of staff requesting the absence will first discuss it with his/her HoD and the HoD will sign the absence form to the effect that this has been done, adding any comment or recommendation he/she wishes to make about the absence. In order to try to achieve as high a level of parity between departments as possible, the Head will make the final decision, which may, on occasion, involve over-ruling an HoD recommendation.
5. In the case of planned leave, staff are reminded that there is no automatic right to time off during term time (which includes days when staff are working but which are not teaching days) and that in respect of every absence, there are two questions to be asked, namely:
 - “May I have permission to be absent from school?” to which the answer may either be “Yes, you may” or “No, I’m sorry, you may not.” If the answer is affirmative, then and only then is it time for the second question, which is:
 - Will the leave be paid or unpaid?

Staff who request absence and are turned down commit a very grave professional misdemeanour if they then take the leave anyway. Such action will be construed as gross insubordination and will attract very severe consequences.

The School and the Headmaster are not unsympathetic to particular individual circumstances, and may be prepared on occasion to consider a case on its merits.