

COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY  
FOR  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
Diocese of Rockville Centre

- Statement of objectives to be accomplished

The Education Department of the Diocese of Rockville Centre establishes this policy to ensure the maintenance of an adequate record verifying the attendance of all children at instruction in accordance with Education Law Section 3205. The policy is designed to ensure sufficient pupil attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities to permit such pupils to succeed at meeting the State learning standards.

- Description of the specific strategies to accomplish each objective

- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each school day prior to the first period of instruction.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each scheduled class period when pupils move freely between classes.
- Attendance will be taken after the pupils return from lunch.
- Attendance will be taken on class and/or school field trips.

- Determination of the kinds of absences, tardiness and early departures that will be excused and those that will not be excused; and a list of excused and unexcused absences and tardiness to illustrate each

- A pupil is considered absent if not present when attendance is taken.
- A pupil who arrives after the time fixed by school policy for the beginning of the morning or afternoon sessions is tardy.
- A pupil is absent for part of day if present when attendance is taken and then leaves school.
- Incidents of absence and tardiness will be classified as either excused or unexcused. An excused absence/tardiness is one recognized by the Education Department and the school administrators as valid and unavoidable. An unexcused absence/tardiness occurs when the reason offered does not show unavoidable circumstances or necessity.
- Truancy is the willful violation by a student of the compulsory attendance provisions of Education Law.

Excused The following reasons for absence or tardiness may be considered excused.	Unexcused The following reasons for absence or tardiness would ordinarily be considered unexcused.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sick</li> <li>• scheduled medical appointments</li> <li>• sickness or death in family</li> <li>• day of religious observance</li> <li>• bad weather; impassable roads</li> <li>• court appearance</li> <li>• family emergency</li> <li>• district bus problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• music lessons</li> <li>• take child to work</li> <li>• high school visits</li> <li>• family trips</li> <li>• CYO trips</li> <li>• didn't have a ride</li> <li>• truant</li> </ul>

- Description of the coding system used to identify the reason for pupil's absence, tardiness or early departure, recorded in the register of attendance

The following coding will be used. Marginal notations may be made for clarification.

<b>Excused</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Unexcused</b>	<b>Code</b>
Sick	ES	Trip/vacation (family, CYO, etc.)	UT
Medical appointment (limited hours)	EM	Music lesson	UM
Family sickness/death/emergency	EF	Take child to Work day	UW
Religious observance	ER	Visit to high school	UV
Court appearance	EC	Problem with car/ride	UP
Weather/impassable roads	EW	Other (not deemed acceptable)	UO
District transportation	ED		
Other (documented/noted)	EO		
	Truant	---	
	Out of school suspension	OSU	
	In school suspension	ISU	

- Description of the Diocese of Rockville Centre Education Department policy regarding pupil attendance and a pupil's ability to receive course credit

Regular attendance is a critical factor in school success for pupils.

Therefore, both pupils and their parents must view regular attendance as the most effective way of meeting course requirements. Course credit is awarded based on satisfactory completion of course requirements. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school administration of an attendance concern.

- Description of:
  - incentives to be used to encourage pupils to attend school
  - disciplinary sanctions to be used to discourage unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures

Each elementary school of the Diocese of Rockville Centre will identify those incentives and sanctions that will promote regular attendance. These will be particular to each school and will include parental consultation when warranted.

<b>Suggested Incentives</b>	<b>Suggested Sanctions</b>
Parents of students who are absent or late for ten days of school will be invited for a conference with the school administration.	The absence/tardiness could preclude participation in extra-curricular activities on that day.
The school will establish a policy to recognize <u>perfect</u> attendance.	A parent/student conference would be required. An erratic or irregular attendance pattern puts a student in jeopardy of retention in the grade.

- Description of the notice to be provided to the parents of a pupil who is absent, tardy or leaves school early without an acceptable excuse

Parents of a pupil who is absent, tardy, or leaves school early without an acceptable excuse will receive written notification through the office of the principal. Such written notification will include:

- pupil’s name and grade level
- date of occurrence
- portion of day and/or class(es) missed
- date of previous notice(s), if any
- name and address of person to whom the notification is sent
- date of the notification

Sample notification

**ST. BRIGID/OUR LADY OF HOPE REGIONAL SCHOOL**

101 Maple Avenue, Westbury, NY 11590 • (516) 333-0580 • www.stbolh.org



- 1<sup>st</sup> Notice (date) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2<sup>d</sup> Notice \_\_\_\_\_
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Notice \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

RE:

- Absence: Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tardiness: Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Absence for part of school day: Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent (or Guardian) must provide the school with written notification for a child’s absence and/or tardiness. Please fill in the information below and return this letter to the school office immediately.**

Student’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student’s Class \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of absence (or tardiness) \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for absence (or tardiness) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (parent or guardian) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- Description of the process the schools of the Diocese of Rockville Centre will use to develop specific intervention strategies to address attendance problems

When a child has been absent, the school must require a written excuse from a parent. These notes must be kept on file for one year. If a pupil is absent without an excuse, or if the school has reason to suspect the validity of the excuse, the principal should investigate the situation. In some cases referral to a guidance clinic may be helpful. If all efforts to persuade the child to return to school are fruitless, the case should be referred to the attendance teacher assigned to the local public school.

- It is the responsibility of the teacher to make the parents and administration aware of any attendance problems
- Notification form will be sent to parents when proper excuse has not been provided.
- After ten days, parents will be asked to come in for a conference to address attendance concerns.
- If necessary an outside agency/proper authority will be notified.
- Identification of the person(s) designated in each school building who will be responsible for:
  - reviewing attendance records
  - initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil attendance according to the comprehensive attendance policy
- Under powers delegated to the principal by the pastor or regional school board, the principal has full charge of the internal administration of the school.
- The principal may designate a school administrator or teacher to assist with implementation of the comprehensive school attendance policy. Such designee will be identified for the beginning of the school year.
- The principal and/or designee will review attendance data to look for patterns of unexcused absences and will initiate interventions to reduce such unexcused absences.
- An individual in the school is to be identified as the one responsible to identify and follow up on attendance concerns
- School policy will include guidelines for teachers and for the school nurse.