



# Tatworth

Primary School

## Attendance Policy

Ratified by:	SLT
Date:	October 2022
Next Review:	As guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated

Distribution:	e.g. OneDrive Website
Related Documents	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Behaviour for Learning Policy

## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- › Promoting good attendance
- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

- › To involve pupils more in recognising the importance in their attendance
- › To improve communication with parents about regular school attendance
- › To ensure parents appreciate good attendance is an integral part of the home school agreement
- › All school staff to continue to take responsibility with pupils and parents for pupils' attendance
- › To recognise the important role of teachers and administration staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- › Effective working relationship with Education Welfare Service, and the reporting of half-termly figures to the service
- › To ensure all partners are aware of their roles and responsibilities in monitoring good attendance.

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing 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
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is 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 pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- › 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
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Tracey Hart and can be contacted via 01460 220565 or [Tracey.Hart@tatworthschool.co.uk](mailto:Tracey.Hart@tatworthschool.co.uk)

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer can be contacted via 01460 220565. The Headteacher is covering this role at the moment.

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording, and saving, attendance twice a day via SIMS, using the correct codes. The register will automatically be sent to the school office once the register is saved.

### 3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

### 3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time.

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. Messages may be left on the messaging system if the call is not picked up by office staff.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information.
- To discuss the setting of targets for the school with the education Welfare Officer (EWO) and the School Improvement Partner as appropriate.
- To ensure that such data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO.
- To agree specific targets for individuals, groups, years and the whole school.
- To reward pupils for attendance, either individually or within classes.
- To keep parents, pupils and directors informed of policy, practice and targets at least annually.
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for vulnerable groups

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the school day. School starts at 8.50am, the register closes at 9.00am and children arriving after 9.00am will be marked as late. The register will also be taken at the start of the afternoon.

It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not

- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also section 7).

A telephone message may be left by telephoning 01460 220565, or by holding the line and speaking to a member of the office staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

If at all possible, medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. If your child has to attend an appointment during school hours they should attend school for the majority of the day, only being absent for the duration of the appointment and travel time. They will need to be signed out at reception and sight of the appointment letter, preferably before the day, will be required.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- › The attendance officer will speak to parents and carers to understand barriers to attendance and work with the parent to remove the barrier

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- › Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, they will attempt to make contact by visiting the property and if this is unsuccessful may contact the police.
- › Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- › Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- › Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

## 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Parents and carers receive a record of their child's annual attendance in writing with the end of year report.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

### 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

#### **7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Work with the EWO. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed, by SLT, as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated.

### **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix – DfE Attendance Codes

### Codes

Code	Description
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Abs
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work Experience
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
X	Non-compulsory school age or COVID-19 related
-	All should attend / No mark recorded