

Attendance Policy

September 2023



Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer.

We believe that regular attendance at school is vital for children to be successful.



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Written on:	March 2016
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Next Review:	September 2024
Staff Responsibility	Ms K. Millar
Governor responsibility	Mr S. Reynolds

Introduction:

- Children are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have and we will endeavour to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support regular attendance. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.
- At Teagues Bridge Primary School we expect children to attend school every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer. We believe that regular attendance at school is vital for children to be successful.
- School education lays the vital foundation of a child's life and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance, punctuality and educational progress and attainment.
- Parents/Carers, it is your responsibility to ensure your child/children arrive at school and return home safely.

Aims:

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support children and their Parents/Carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning.

- Enable children to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Make parents/carers aware of the legal responsibilities;
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets.

Expectations:

We expect that all children will:

- Attend school every day as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance

We expect all parent/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact school DAILY of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's/carer's concerns
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality
- Contact parents on the first day of absence when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Log conversations with parents about attendance to assist in the monitoring of attendance and the offering of support.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the headteacher can authorise the absence. In

the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.

- Regularly inform parents/carers of the % attendance of all children
- Make initial enquires regarding children who are not attending regularly
- The nominated attendance person in school will monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- The nominated attendance person in school will refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Officer
- Will notify the LA after 15 days sickness
- Will notify the Education Welfare Officer after 10 days unexplained absence
- Will notify the Education Welfare Officer and ask for a home visit if there is a concern over a welfare of the child.

Definitions:

- Every day count as two sessions
- Every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.
- Regular attendance means that your child must attend school every day, unless there are justified reasons, and arrive at school on time.

Authorised Absence

- An authorised absence is classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from the parent/carer. The headteacher authorises the absence.

Unauthorised Absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the headteacher.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has not been given.
- If your child fails to register or is absent and we have not received notification by 9.10am a call or text will be made to you. It is the parent's responsibility to call the school each day their child is off school and explain the reason why. If a child is absent from

school with no explanation offered by the parents/carers, it becomes an unauthorised absence.

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
<p>Genuine illness of the pupil;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil; ○ Major religious observances; ○ Visits to prospective new schools; ○ External exams or educational assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shopping/daytrip/visit to a theme park; ○ A birthday treat; ○ Oversleeping due to a late night; ○ Looking after other children/other family members; ○ Appointments for other family members; ○ Holidays which have not been agreed ○ No explanation of reason for absence has been given

Each child's attendance can be summarised using the new traffic light system outlined below:

Attendance	Rating	Action
96-100%	Safe Zone	Outstanding ~ this will help all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic. Your child's attendance is at, or above, the school target. Keep up the good work.
91-95%	Sliding Zone	Strive to build on this ~ Your child's attendance is below expected and will be monitored. A letter will be sent to inform you of your child's attendance percentage to date.

Below 90%	Danger Zone	Poor absence - Absence is now significantly affecting your child's attainment and progress. This is a cause for concern and will be monitored closely. You will receive a letter from the headteacher and intervention and support will be commenced.
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Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Attendance will be reported to parents regularly using the traffic light system, this will allow parents to see the bigger picture. Children will receive a letter which will be colour coded according to their level of attendance. **GOLD** for 100%, **Green** for 96%+, **Yellow** for 91%-95% and **Red** for 90% and below.

Every third week meetings will allow for attendance and lateness to be monitored and parents will receive a letter and a recent attendance record if they fall below 91%. The reasons for the absence will be considered as they may be a genuine illness (chicken Pox, Tonsillitis etc.). The letter will outline the school's concern and the need for an improvement. This is followed up with a second letter and then a third inviting parents to attend an 'Attendance Panel review'. At this meeting an attendance action plan will be written. If attendance does not improve as a result of this meeting a second meeting is arranged with the local authority.

Awards will be in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Punctual Panda will reward children for being in school on time and each week a name will be drawn for each base. For the best attendance each base is rewarded with the attendance trophy each week and each term the class with the overall best attendance will be allowed a non-uniform day.

When to report Absence to the school:

All absences must be reported on a daily basis. In all cases of absence the parents/carers should:

- Only keep your child away from school if really necessary. The school will always call and send home an unwell child;
- Telephone the school on 01952388450 at the earliest opportunity to let them know why your child is going to be absent. Please try and phone by 9.10am at the very latest and leave a voicemail message if the line is engaged. Alternatively, send an email to A2191@tel.ford.gov.uk to report the absence.
- Please call daily and keep the school informed if more than one day's absence is necessary;
- Send a note to school explaining the reason for the absence;
- If medical appointments are absolutely necessary, please bring your child to school for the rest of the school day and ensure the administrator has seen the appointment card.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness:

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other children in the class. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time. For school children the gates open at 8.43am and the doors at 8.45 am. Registration closes promptly at 9.00am. If you arrive after this time they must enter via the school office where they will need to be signed in by a Parent/Carer. Your child will receive a late mark in the register.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 9.00am and pupils who arrive after this time will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.00am and after this lateness may be recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken between 12:45-1:00pm for KS1 and 1:30-1:45 for KS2
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by meetings with parents/carers. Prior to this letters will be sent out outlining the number of lates and the next steps if this does not improve.

- Children's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed in to future schools as necessary.

Pupils leaving during the school day:

During school hours, the school staff are legally responsible for them and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Children are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of the school time.
- If children do have to attend appointments during the school day, a copy of the letter is requested and the parent is asked to take a signed slip to the appointment, this provides evidence they have attended.
- Parents/Carers are requested to confirm in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, and the expected time of return.
- Children must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a child is being collected from the school, parents/carers are to report to the school office before the child is allowed to leave the site.
- The school site is secure but if it happens that a child leaves the school site without permission, their parents/carers will be contacted immediately. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the child as a missing person.

Why attendance and punctuality matters:

Across one school year:

- Less than 5 days absence = 97.3% attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 92.6% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 89.4% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 84.2% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 39 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

The Law:

By law, parents and carers must ensure that all children of compulsory school age (5-16) receive a suitable, full-time education. Telford and Wrekin Council Attendance support both schools and parents/carers to ensure that every child attends school regularly. As a parent/carers you may be committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice, prosecution or application for an education supervision order.

Leave of absence

- Please be aware that the Education regulations 2013, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Any absence must be requested as far in advance as possible, and no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. An application form for leave of absence during term time can be found on the school website or you can ask for one from the office.
- The guidance from Telford and Wrekin Council states that if a parent/carers takes their child out of school, e.g. on holiday or other unauthorised leave of absence, for 5 days (10 sessions) or more, without the authority of the headteacher, each parent/carers may be liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent.
- If leave is taken without authorisation by the school, it may be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Telford and Wrekin Education Welfare Officer will be notified. A penalty notice will probably be issued.

Penalty Notices:

Under existing legislation, each parent/carers commits an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised. Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Telford and Wrekin Council considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that penalty notices may be issued in the following circumstances where unauthorised absence occurs:

- Children identified by police or Education welfare officers engaged on truancy patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

- Unauthorised leave of absence during term time.
- Where it is judged that a parent/carer is failing to engage with any supportive measures proposed by the school. This may be considered if a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence during the previous 6 school weeks. Unauthorised absence may include arriving late after the close of registration without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence (applied for but refused) taken in term time, parents/carers will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

The amount payable on issue of a penalty notice is £60 (issued to each parent/carer, for each child) if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices will increase to £120 after 21 days but must be paid within 28 days. After 28 days, the LA may prosecute under section 444 Education Act 1996.

Behaviour and Penalty Notices relating to Exclusions:

- Section 103 of the Education and Inspectors Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice.
- The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid, the recipient may be prosecuted for the offence under section 103.
- Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Please see attached action plan to support the drive to improve attendance and Punctuality.

Also included is a copy of the attendance action plan completed at the panel review meetings.

Attendance data 2021-2022

	No. on roll	Attendance %	Authorised Absence %	Unauthorised Absence %	Persistent absence at 90% or below (no of children)
Base 1	27	91.03	4.71	0.25	37% (10)
Base 2	32	92.71	5.72	1.56	21.87% (7)
Base 3	30	93.17	6.64	0.17	23.33% (7)
Base 4	30	94.20	4.97	0.81	23.33% (7)
Base 5	33	92.86	6.58	0.54	21.21% (7)
Base 6	32	92.22	7.15	0.61	21.87% (7)
Base 7	32	94.02	5.63	0.34	21.87% (7)
Base 8	31	92.17	7.29	0.52	29.03% (9)
Base 9	33	92.32	6.64	1.02	21.21% (7)

Children missing from education

Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to Education Welfare Officer AT Telford and Wrekin Council.

Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts (parents are asked to provide a minimum of two emergency contacts in the event of children not arriving at school without prior notification and also for other emergency purposes).
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's file

In Conclusion

It is our belief that good attendance and punctuality is at the heart of a child's progress and is, therefore, fundamental to our school's success.

Teagues Bridge Primary School greatly appreciates parental support to reduce the total amount of days lost due to holidays. The School is committed to working in partnership with parents to enable all children to reach their academic potential and to support their social development and for this to happen individual attendance needs to be as high as possible and we all need to play our part.