



TENTERFIELDS PRIMARY Academy ATTENDANCE POLICY 2017-18

Tenterfields Primary School is committed to the inclusion of pupils and stakeholders, regardless of age, race, gender or disability, and expects all members of our school community to share in this commitment. Where necessary or appropriate we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusion for all.”

At Tenterfields we believe that attendance and punctuality are vital for a child to maximise both their educational and social potential to the fullest and to create and develop an ongoing feeling of belonging in their class/school community.

SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION

All staff at Tenterfields Primary Academy are aware that “**Safeguarding is everyone’s business**”.

We all play a crucial role in protecting children and young people and keeping them safe or helping them to feel safe.

Ofsted **under Section 5**, make judgements in relation to the effectiveness of Safeguarding.

Tenterfields Primary Academy recognises its legal duty under **Section 157 and 175 of The Education Act 2002**, to work together with other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Our school has a clear “**Child Protection Policy**” which takes into account the “**Working Together to Safeguard Children**” 2015 and is reviewed annually, and ensures all staff including Governors and Volunteers under take appropriate training with regard to safeguarding.

All staff are aware of their responsibilities to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (**DSL**) and the Local Authority of children who are persistently absent or missing or any children they intend to remove from the school’s roll.

Expectations:

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable and then authorised by the Head teacher.

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

The school day starts at 8.55 a.m., doors open at 8.45 a.m. to allow a calm start to the day. Lessons begin promptly at 9 a.m.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Please contact the school to discuss with the Head Teacher.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required in writing.

As a school we follow the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines and aim for our children to maintain an attendance figure of above 96% throughout the academic year. There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement.



The Government has stated that once a child's actual attendance falls below 90% they are classed as **persistently absent**.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school when the school is aware that the pupil is not in school, that school has been given a reason for the absence by the parent/carer, which has been accepted. The school also agrees that the child should not be in school.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider the reason provided by parent/carer is reasonable and cannot be accepted or allowed by the by the Head teacher for purposes of authorisation.

- **parents keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **truancy before or during the school day**
- **absences which have never been properly explained**
- **children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**

(Late arrival in the classroom for registration, both in the morning and afternoon, may be recorded as unauthorised absence for that half day session)

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. However, leave may be granted in cases if an emergency which parents/carers should negotiate with the Head teacher on an individual basis. Parents will be advised on the amount of absence that the Head teacher can agree to authorise in each instance. Any extension to the original agreement may not be authorised.

For a medical appointment in school time, school may ask parents/carers to ensure their child attends registration, is collected from school and then returned after the appointment in order for the absence to be authorised.

The timing of and venue of the appointment will need to be evidenced and discussed with school to agree arrangements.

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Investigation Service (EIS) for the Local Authority. If a referral is made parents/carers should be aware that the following penalties could apply:

Penalty Notice Fines issued by the Local Authority

The Education Investigation Service at the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice Fine of up to £120 (per parent/per child) or instigate legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court in the following circumstances:

- ***Where an excluded child is identified in a public place in the first 6 days of an exclusion,***
- ***Where a Formal Warning Notice has previously been issued regarding unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence is accrued,***
- ***Where there is recorded unauthorised term time leave of absence/holiday leave.***

Further information regarding Penalty Notice Fines and other enforcement proceedings relating to school attendance can be obtained from the Education Investigation Service (01384 813417).

If this remains unpaid after 28 days, the fixed penalty notice increases to £120.00 per parent, per child (total £480.00). If this remains unpaid by the 42nd day, court action may be instigated and fines imposed of up to £1000.00 per parent per child (£4000.00)



The EIS Officer (EIO) will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Investigation Service themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- **On the first day of the child's absence the parent should telephone the school by 9.30 am to explain the child's absence. On the child's return, a full explanation of the absence should be shared with the school.**
- **If a child has a medical appointment, then the school should be notified in advance in writing. If available, a letter from the establishment which the child will be attending should be shown to the class teacher.**
- **Parents are expected to cooperate with school staff, and respond to calls, texts and any other correspondence in relation to attendance matters**

Children Missing Education:

If any pupil has 10 consecutive school days of absence and school have undertaken their own enquiries and it is established that they are CME and not just absent from school. The school can then make a referral to the EIS, who will then undertake their own enquiries in trying to establish the child's whereabouts. The EIS will then agree with school when to remove the pupil/s name from school roll, under Regulation 8 of the Pupil Registration Regulations 2006. You will receive this in writing with a date when this agreement is from

General Attendance

School attendance and punctuality is monitored weekly.

For children whose attendance falls below 90% parents and carers will be contacted as a matter of routine, and attendance monitored weekly.

Any attendance below 90% is classed as **Persistence Absence**. Parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 90% will also be contacted as a matter of routine

Any child who has **persistent unauthorised absence or lateness**, whose attendance falls below 80%, may be referred to an Education Investigation Officer.

Illness

Parents must contact school and follow up any verbal communication by letter.

After a total of 10 days evidence will be required as proof of illness, examples include copies of prescriptions or confirmed by a healthcare professional.

After a total of 20 days absence a medical note will be required and parents & carers will be offered support.

Term Time Absence

The Head Teacher is **unable** to authorise any absence for holiday during term time.

Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time, both educationally and for other school activities, making it difficult for them to catch up with work later on.

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday. **The school cannot authorise holiday in school time except in exceptional circumstances**



If parents need to take their child out of school during term time they should submit a request in writing, 10 days prior to the requested dates.

- Parents should not ask for leave during test periods.
- A leave of absence request form must be completed by parents.
- Parents must arrange to see the Head Teacher to discuss the request.
- In the absence of the Head Teacher, the Deputy Head Teacher may meet with parents and carers.
- There will be 0 days authorised absence in respect of term time holidays. Further advice can be found on the DfE website.

If the leave of absence request is not authorised and parents state their intention to take the holiday regardless, parents will be advised that there will be an automatic referral to Education Investigation and that they should expect contact from the service, and a warning notice issued.

If parents then take the holiday after a request has not been authorised, or if school has reason to believe that a holiday has been taken that is without prior discussion, notification or authorisation, or that school has been given another reason for the absence, a call will be made to home telephone numbers, a referral will then be made to Education Investigation Service and a fixed penalty notice will be issued (see penalty notices/fines issued by the local authority).

Lates

If a child arrives late, prior to 9.30 am, the child must enter the School via the main front door, report to the School Office and complete the "Pupil Late Book", giving an explanation as to the reason for the lateness.

The Office Staff scrutinise the registers each day to ensure accurate absence recording and to flag up any unexplained absences marked as "N" by the class teacher, which are awaiting explanation. They will telephone parents/carers on the first day of absence to ascertain the reason for absence and update the register.

The school uses different codes to mark attendance and absence.

Individual Targets, School Targets and Initiatives

The school has an attendance target as part of its statutory annual target setting.

The attendance target for the academic year 2017/2018 is 96%.

People responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

The Head Teacher, and the senior leadership.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance.

Parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All staff are committed to working with parents to ensure that as high a level of attendance as possible is achieved.