

Treetops Learning Community

Attendance and Punctuality

Policy

October 2021



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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Treetops Learning Community represents Treetops School and Treetops Free School and will be referred to as TLC throughout this policy.

TLC recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this attendance policy is therefore to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance for pupils, subsequently they will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.

1. Statutory Duty of Schools

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement for pupils and is essential if pupils are to maximise the opportunities available to them. The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive effective and efficient full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of [compulsory school age](#) who are on TLC's admission roll.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils should:

- Attend school regularly and on time.
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

Parents or Guardians will:

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Actively encourage good attendance and time keeping.
- Inform TLC on the first day of non-attendance by notifying the school office.
- Request any planned absences with the respective Headteacher in advance (e.g. family holidays, exceptional circumstances).
- Provide TLC with appointment letters for all medicals appointments that occur within the school day

Trustees will:

- Regularly monitor the TLC's attendance targets and appoint a trustee to be a member of the attendance review panel.

Headteacher will:

- Set an annual attendance target that is realistic but challenging.
- Ensure procedures and processes are in place that will encourage good attendance for all pupils

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Monitor and oversee the roles of other staff
- Ensure TLC's attendance policy is reviewed annually
- Meet with the Attendance Officer regularly to review pupil attendance (at least each half term).
- Be a member of the TLC's attendance panel

Key Stage Leaders will:

- Receive copies of the termly attendance reports from the Attendance Officer.
- Be aware of any pupils whose attendance is of concern.
- Support Form Tutors in following up any persistent absences or any absences of concern

Form Tutors/Class Teachers will:

- Complete registers in line with the TLC policy twice daily at the start of both morning and afternoon registration.
- Follow up in liaison with the Attendance Officer any unexplained absences.
- Ensure any pupils who are late report to the main school office.
- Follow up any persistent absences or any absences of concern with parents or guardians.

Attendance Officer will

- Check registers on administrative system and update if needed.
- Make phone calls to parents on the first day of any unexplained absences.
- Provide Key Stage Leaders with monthly attendance reports highlighting any concerns.
- Meet half termly with the appropriate Senior Leader to review pupil attendance.
- Send letters to parents/carers, in consultation with Senior Leader if further action is required regarding a pupil absence.
- Liaise with the EWS (Educational Welfare Service)
- Provide the LA with any information they require.
- Follow the TLC School Attendance Management Protocol
- Act early to address patterns of absence

All other Staff will

- Report any absences, lateness or related issues to the appropriate Form Tutor.

3. Procedures

3.1 Registration Procedures

Registers will be completed by Form Tutors or very occasionally by Senior Support Staff in their absence.

Registers will be open from 8.50am – 9.00am for the morning session and 1.05pm -1.15pm for the afternoon session.

3.2 Lateness

Pupils who arrive after the registers are closed should report to the office. Their name, form, arrival time and reason will be recorded in the 'attendance book'. The attendance officer will update the registers accordingly.

Pupils will be marked as authorised late if they arrive late but before the register is closed or unauthorised if after the close of the register*.

**There are sometimes occasions where this may be extended e.g. where school transport is delayed and in no way the fault of the pupil/parent. This will be at the discretion of the Attendance Officer and Senior Leader.*

3.3 Categorisation of Absences

A pupil will be deemed absent from school when they are not physically present on school premises. It is only TLC that can authorise an absence if it is satisfied that the reason is legitimate.

TLC may authorise the following:

3.4 Illness, medical and dental appointments

TLC will need to be satisfied that this is legitimate. TLC will ask for evidence for all appointments that occur within the school day. If a pupil is sent home from school for sickness and/or diarrhoea the

pupil cannot attend school for a period of 48 hours following the initial absence in line with the Medical Policy.

3.5 Family bereavement

TLC will always consider requests to attend funerals or to give pupils appropriate time to come to terms with such an event.

3.6 Family Holidays and extended trips overseas

Whilst parents can apply for holiday during term time. In accordance with the Government's Education Regulations Headteachers are no longer able to grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. However, TLC will consider any application from parents on its merits and will take into account the impact on the pupil's education, the time of year (SATs, Exams etc.) and the pupil's attendance record which would normally need to be more than 95%.

3.7 Days of religious observance

Parents should seek permission from TLC, in writing. The school should satisfy itself that the religious festival is related to the religion practised by the family.

3.8 Other exceptional circumstances

These will be looked at individually bearing in mind the considerations laid out above.

3.9 Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

This addendum is in relation to sessions that take place in the 2021/22 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 risk assessment](#) sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. TLC will not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. If a pupil tests positive for COVID-19 and has been in school, close contacts in school will be offered a Lateral Flow Test (LFT). If this produces a positive result, the pupil will be sent home to get a PCR, and can only return to school on evidence of a negative PCR test.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.

If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as code X.

Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and TLC will strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, TLC will record the pupil as code X in the register.

TLC will follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. TLC will request supporting evidence from the family. Where TLC is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence

3.10 Sickness reporting procedure

Parents can report a child's absence:

By phoning the school and either speaking to the Attendance Officer or leaving a message with the school Admin team.

Sending in a dated letter of which the Attendance Officer will make a note and place on the pupil's file accompanied with supporting medical evidence where appropriate.

3.11 Letters Home

Where a pupil's absence is of continued concern despite contact by phone by the Attendance Officer and/or Form Tutor the Attendance Management Protocol will be followed.

3.12 Incentives and Rewards

Weekly class attendance cup with certificates

Termly class attendance certificate

Yearly class attendance certificate

100% attendance certificates

House points for 100% attendance each term

3.13 Exclusions

On the rare occasion when a pupil is excluded from school for a fixed term they will be deemed as absent but authorised. The school will follow all local and national procedures.

3.14 Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for Unauthorised Absence from school

With effect from September 2017 a Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices in cases of Unauthorised Absences from any school or alternative provision was shared with Heads of Centres. It applies to all schools within Thurrock, including academies, free schools and establishments where alternative provision is arranged under section 19 of the Education Act 1996. Treetops Learning Community falls within these parameters and the attached booklet provides advice regarding the issuing of penalty notices by the local authority.

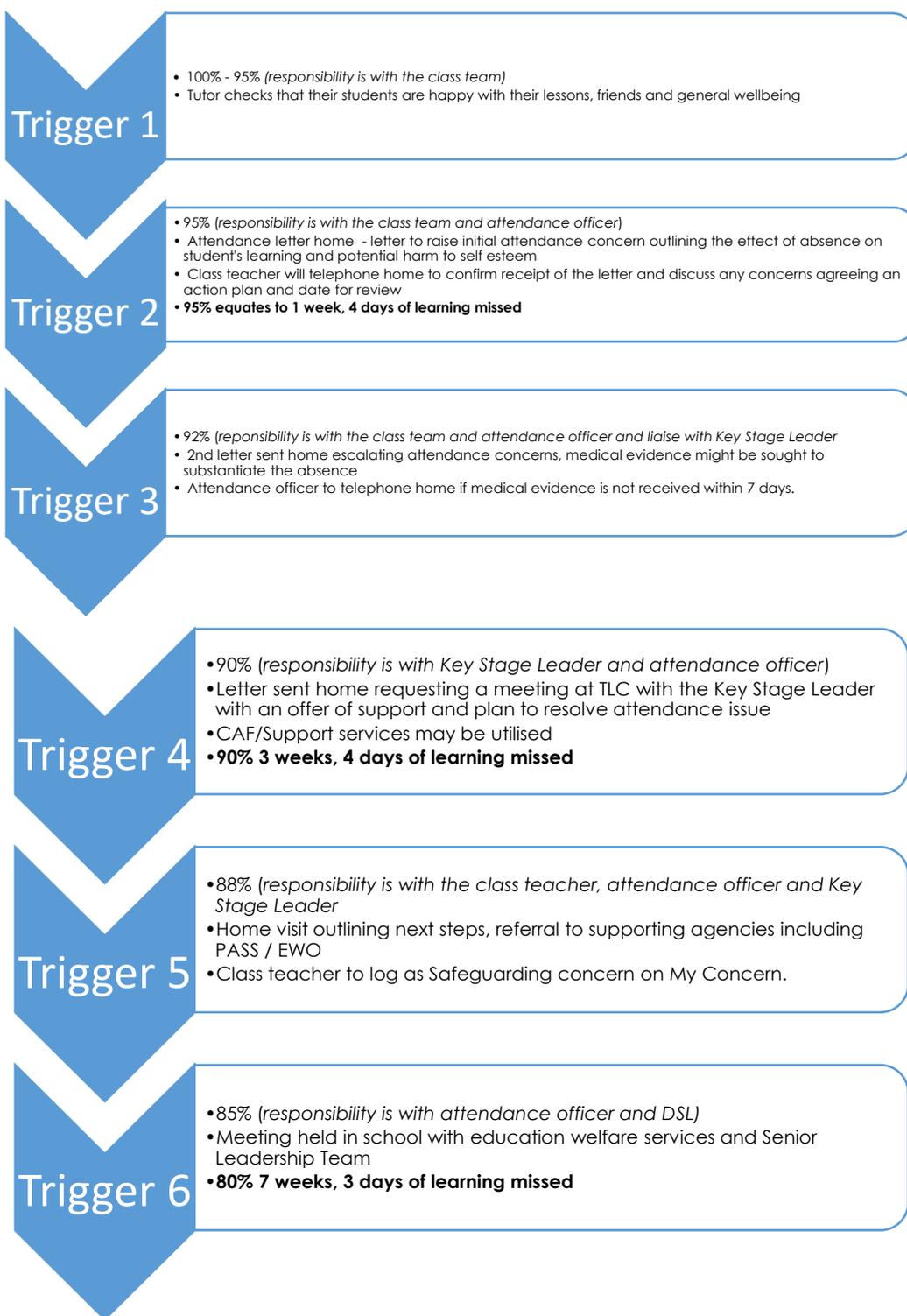
4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

TLC will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

4. Treetops Learning Community Attendance Management Protocol

Initial absence actions

- On the first day of an absence, if TLC has not received absence notification from home the Attendance Officer will send a text via "In Touch" and then follow up if a response is not received with a telephone call home to establish the reason. This will also apply on the second day of absence.
- On the third day of absence where TLC have still not been notified of a reason for the absence a home visit will take place by a member of staff.
- On day three if a reason is not established having carried out all of the above, TLC will inform the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Social Care will be informed at every trigger if the student is either on a CIN/CP Plan or Looked After Child.



5. CME (Children Missing Education)

Children at Risk of Missing Education School governing bodies, academy trusts, and other school proprietors must have regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. TLC have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil TLC will ensure we hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. Where TLC staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated and report the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education. All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided. Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.