

# **Treetops Learning Community**

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

### **Policy**

October 2022



## Treetops Learning Community

# 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.

### **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

### **2. Statutory Duty of Schools**

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government expects:

- schools and local authorities to:
  - promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
  - ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - act early to address patterns of absence
- parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- all pupils to be punctual to their lessons

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 the admission roll.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing board

- Responsible for promoting the importance of school attendance
- Making sure school leasers fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly monitor the TLC’s attendance targets and appoint a Governor to be a member of the attendance review panel.

Headteacher will:

- Implement the Attendance Policy and ensure it is reviewed annually
- Set an annual attendance target that is realistic but challenging.
- Monitor school-level absence and report data to the Governors

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Lead on attendance throughout the school, monitoring and overseeing the roles of other staff
- Meet with the Attendance Officer regularly to review pupil attendance (at least each half term) and identify areas of focus for improvement
- Deliver specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Be a member of the TLC's attendance panel

Key Stage Leaders will:

- Analyse half-termly attendance reports from the Attendance Officer.
- Be aware of any pupils whose attendance is of concern and offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Support Form Tutors in following up any persistent absences or any absences of concern
- Act early to address patterns of absence providing appropriate support

Form Tutors 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 carers..
- Act early to address patterns of absence providing appropriate support

Attendance Officer will

- Take calls from parents on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Check registers on school system are completed daily at morning and afternoon registration
- Send alert e-mail to parents on the first day of any unexplained absences and follow up with phone call if contact is not made.
- Monitor and analyse data and provide Key Stage Leaders with monthly attendance reports highlighting areas of concern
- 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 on Attendance data
- Follow the TLC School Attendance Management Protocol
- Act early to address patterns of absence

Pupils should:

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

Parents or Carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school every day.
- Inform the school office on the first day of non-attendance before 8.45am and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- 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, but where possible ensure appointments are made outside of the school day
- Provide TLC with more than one emergency contact number for their child

All other Staff will

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

#### **4. Procedures**

##### **4.1 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 -1.10pm for the afternoon session.

##### **4.2 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.*

##### **4.3 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:

##### **4.4 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.

##### **4.5 Family bereavement**

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

##### **4.6 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%.

##### **4.7 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.

#### **4.8 Other exceptional circumstances**

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

#### **4.9 Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19**

##### **Children and young people (aged 18 years and under) who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19**

Respiratory infections are common in children and young people, particularly during the winter months. Symptoms can be caused by several respiratory infections including the common cold, COVID-19 and RSV. For most children and young people, these illnesses will not be serious, and they will soon recover following rest and plenty of fluids. Very few children and young people with respiratory infections become seriously unwell. This is also true for children and young people with long-term conditions.

Attending education is hugely important for children and young people's health and their future.

##### **When children and young people with symptoms should stay at home and when they can return to education**

Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting. Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.

##### **Children and young people aged 18 years and under who have a positive test result**

It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional. If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower. This is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

Children and young people who usually go to school, and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

#### **4.10 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.

#### **4.11 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.

#### **4.12 Incentives and Rewards**

Weekly class attendance cup with certificates

Termly class attendance certificate

Yearly class attendance certificate

100% attendance certificates

#### **4.13 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.

#### **4.14 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

#### **4.15 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.

### **5. 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.

### **6. 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.



## 7.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.

### 8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy