Tredington Primary School Attendance Policy

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GLA ATTENDANCE POLICY on the website

http://www.gloucslearningalliance.org.uk/

Linked policies:
• GLA Attendance Policy • GLA safeguarding Policy • TPS safeguarding handbook

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Attendance data for
Tredington Primary School

The Governing Body of Tredington Primary School (GLA) is responsible for setting the attendance targets. The School Attendance targets must be agreed, signed by the Governing Body, Head Teacher and sent to the Education Welfare Service by 31st December each year.

Tredington Primary School

Tredington Primary School Attendance Targets		Attendance Actually Achieved (%)
2014/15		92.78
2015/16		94.58
2016/17		94.99
2017/18		93.97
2018/19		94.63
2019/20		92.91
2020/21	97%	94.55

Attendance Overall / Authorised / Unauthorised			
School Year	Attendances (%)	Authorised absence (%)	Unauthorised absence (%)
2014/15	92.78	5.02	2.20
2015/16	94.58	3.60	1.81
2016/17	94.99	3.82	1.19
2017/18	93.97	4.92	1.11
2018/19	94.63	4.23	1.14
2019/20	92.91	6.07	1.01

Record of Lateness Authorised / Unauthorised for Whole School		
School Year	Late before registration closed – Authorised	Late after registration closed – Unauthorised
2014/15	268- 0.88%	8- 0.03%
2015/16	301- 0.92%	0
2016/17	502- 1.39%	0
2017/18	368- 0.95%	0
2018/19	447- 1.15%	0
2019/20	170- 0.66%	0

Introduction:

At TPS we expect pupils to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence.

At TPS our purpose is to provide a safe, challenging and happy learning environment for all pupils. We encourage high self-esteem so that every child will be motivated to reach his or her full potential. Everyone at TPS is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all our pupils encouraging them to 'Aspire, Create, Excel!'.

Our school is a fun, welcoming place and by encouraging children to attend school regularly and punctually, their experience of school life is enriched. We believe that if children are to succeed both in school and in later life, good habits should be instilled at a young age. It is unsettling for children if they arrive late as well as causing disruption to other pupils and the class teacher.

The school community consists of parents, pupils, children and all staff and together we aim to form a partnership in taking responsibility for excellent attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and we are aware of the need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems, which can be used whenever there are concerns over a particular pupil.

The staff of TPS aim to work with Parents, Children and Local Authority to help every one attend school as regularly as possible.

The Education Act of 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Section 444 of this Act states:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence".

Registration:

All schools are required to keep an admissions register (the school roll) and an attendance register which must be marked once at the beginning of the morning session and again immediately after lunch. Attendance Codes are provided by the DfE via Gloucestershire Local Education Authority. The school register, which is marked electronically, is a legal document and is kept by the school for a minimum of three years. Pupils are recorded on the register as being present, engaged in or out of school activity or absent.

Children who are not in class at the time of registration are recorded as absent; an appropriate code will be added to the register when a reason for the absence has been provided by the parent/guardian.

Any child arriving at school after 8.45am is late and is marked in the class register as "L".
Any child arriving 20 minutes after registration (i.e. After 9.05am) will be marked in the school register as "U". This is unauthorised lateness and counts statistically as an absence for the whole session.

We will be making contact directly with parents for children who are persistently late.

Attendance Codes:

CODE	MEANING
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late - arriving via the front door after 8.45am
U	Late - 9.05am or after – unauthorised
E	Excluded
G	Family Holiday - unauthorised
H	Family Holiday – agreed with Head Teacher in advance
I	Illness – as diagnosed by a parent or guardian
M	Pupil is absent for a medical/dental appointment or is in hospital
C	Other authorised circumstances
O	Unauthorised circumstances - no reason provided or unacceptable reason
R	Religious Observance usually non-Christian family celebrations
V	Approved Educational Visits
P	Approved Sporting Activity

The School Day:

Punctuality:

The school gates are opened at 8:30am. Any child arriving after the gates are shut (8.45am) should enter school via the front door and report immediately to the school office. The pupil's name will be recorded in the late log, by the school Attendance Officers, with details of their class, time of arrival and a reason for their lateness if given. Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve. Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness (5 lates over a short term) parents/carers will receive a text message and/or letter advising them of the concerns, a phone call home to discuss. The school attendance team may call an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) to address the issues and provide support if the lateness continues. Lateness affects attendance figures for individual pupils and class groups as well as the whole school and is closely monitored on a daily basis.

Absence from School:

If a pupil is prevented from attending school as a result of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school of the pupil's absence. We ask that this should be done as soon as possible after 8.00am on the first day of absence **and then on each consecutive day of illness or unavoidable instance**. The telephone message will be recorded on an absence slip and filed alongside attendance registers for the duration of the academic year.

Absences due to family bereavement (close relatives only) or for religious observance will be authorised at the Head teacher's discretion. However, absences for shopping, visiting relatives, day trips, birthdays etc will be classed as unauthorised absence.

Medical Appointments:

We encourage parents not to make medical appointments during school time if possible. Medical appointments taken in school time affect attendance figures for individual pupils as well class groups and the school as a whole. **We may ask to see the appointment letter or card for our records.**

Term Time Holidays & Extended Leave of Absence:

"*The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time*". (Department for Education, May 2013)

Holidays will not be authorised during term-time and for students of compulsory school age, unauthorised holidays may result in a Penalty Notice. Warning letters relating to unauthorised absence for holidays, will not be issued. As such, TPS will only authorise a term time holiday request if the reason is believed to meet exceptional circumstances under Government guidelines. Parents must apply in writing to take a child out of school during term time using a holiday request form at least 10 working days prior to the absence. See appendix for copies of the letters, which can also be obtained from the school office.

Requests will be considered on an individual basis following guidelines issued by the Government. Government guidelines, pupil attendance and standard of work at school will take priority when considering holiday requests during term time.

The school reserves the right to refuse to authorise holiday absences if they are not considered to meet exceptional circumstances, are likely to interfere with any SATs tests, examinations or other important activities or if the pupil's attendance is poor. The final decision is at the Head Teacher's discretion. If a pupil goes on holiday without permission, the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Absence will also be unauthorised if a child does not return to school on the agreed date.
Unauthorised absence could incur a penalty notice/fine.

Below is an excerpt taken from the Department of Education website (July 2013). This is official information for schools and parents:

"Any application for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school"

Traveller Absence:

DfE guidance explains that the generic term 'Traveller' covers a number of different groups:

- Roma
- English and Welsh Gypsies

- Irish and Scottish Travellers
- Showmen (Fairground people) and Circus people
- Bargees (occupational boat dwellers)
- New Travellers

Under the Education Act 1996, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, parents are required to ensure that when their children are of compulsory school age and are registered at a school, they attend that school 'regularly', however, parents of children of no fixed abode have a defence against prosecution if they can prove that:

- They are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel.
- The child has attended a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits.
- If the child has attained the age of 6, that they have made at least 200 attendances (sessions) during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

The DfE says that Traveller children whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school. It is advised that Traveller pupils will attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

In cases when the family are travelling for occupational purposes i.e. the family main earner has taken employment a significant distance from the family home and the family are travelling to be together, it is the expectation that the parents/carers inform the school of the date they intend to travel and the date they intend to return. This would then qualify as an authorised Traveller absence.

The law recognises that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families may have additional reasons to keep their children from school, which is different from non- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. Nevertheless, each child must attend school as regularly as the family main earner's trade or business permits and children have to attend at least 200 sessions in a rolling 12-month period. This law does not automatically reduce the number of days that children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families are expected to attend school and at our school we are committed to securing these pupils' regular attendance at 380 sessions each school year.

Late Collection Procedures:

Children should be collected punctually at 3:00pm or, if attending an after school club or activity, at that allocated finish time. If a child is not collected they will be taken to the school reception and their name recorded in a late collection book. Parents/carers will be asked to record a reason for their lateness. Emergency contact numbers will be used if the school is unable to contact parents/carers. Social Services will be informed if a child is left uncollected at 5:00pm.

If parents/carers have an emergency that means they are going to be significantly late, school should be informed as soon as possible. However, parents who are persistently late in collecting their children will be warned by a letter and, if there is no improvement, social services will be informed.

School Attendance Aims:

DEFINITION

At TPS, we expect pupils to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence. Our attendance target is for all children in school every day. We aim to improve attendance and punctuality throughout the school via classes, year group activities and whole school assemblies. We aim to create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm and to demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school.

A weekly attendance is monitored by the School Attendance Officer. This incorporates attendance and punctuality. The classes with the highest attendance are announced in our weekly celebration assembly and presented with a certificate. In addition to this, the class with the overall highest attendance for the term are rewarded with a treat.

School Responsibilities:

All staff at the GLA will provide an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example by their own behaviour.
Staff will encourage good habits by:

- Ensuring that registers are marked accurately and promptly every day.
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence – a letter from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence – only the Head Teacher can decide whether the parents' explanation justifies authorising the absence.
- Responding to absenteeism firmly and consistently with care.
- Contacting parents when the school is concerned about a pupil's absences and making a record of this.
- Consulting with the School Attendance Officer and the Head Teachers if a pupil's attendance gives any cause for concern.
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual pupils.

School Procedure:

The School will go through the registers twice daily to maintain accurate records – absences, late arrivals, medical appointments and other reasons for absence will all be recorded. If no contact has been received by school regarding the reason for a pupil's absence by 10.30am, the school will contact the parents. This will be initially by phone call. The school will endeavour to make contact for the first three days of absence. On the fourth day, a welfare letter will be sent, this may also involve a home visit. If communication continues to be unsuccessful at day five, the Education and Inclusion Team will be informed and the process of 'Missing in Education' will begin.

Details of attendance patterns are passed on to the child's next school.

If there is a pattern of concern over attendance, in the first instance the school will contact the parents to arrange a meeting. Following this the Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team may be involved to discuss any problems. Parents whose children fall below 92% are monitored weekly and sent a warning letter with a date

to improve their child's attendance. If there is no improvement, then an AIM (Attendance Improvement Meeting) is held followed by legal proceedings if necessary. The school attendance team will strive to encourage attendance, to resolve any underlying problems and to discuss appropriate strategies through an AIM. Failure to attend Attendance Improvement Meetings or if no improvement is seen, will result in the school issuing penalty notices and potential legal proceedings.

Parental Responsibilities:

- It is the parents' responsibility to make sure their child gets sufficient sleep, gets up in plenty of time to get ready and eats a good breakfast.
- Children should arrive at school from 8.30am onwards. The school day begins at 8.45am. Any child arriving after 8:45am should enter the building via the front door and report to the school office as a late arrival. The child's name, class, arrival time and any reasons given will be recorded in the late book.
- It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school as soon as possible in the morning if their child will not be attending school.
- Parents should ensure that their child attends school wearing the correct uniform and brings appropriate equipment or kit and provision for lunch.
- School encourages parents to help their children by showing an interest in school life.
- Parents are invited to attend all parents' evenings, parent forums, listen to reading and supervise homework.
- If a child appears reluctant to attend school, parents are encouraged to contact the child's class teacher immediately to discuss any concerns. There could be a number of reasons for this reluctance such as difficulties with school work, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important to identify any reasons for a reluctance to attend school quickly and before it becomes a more serious issue.

The Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team:

The Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team will liaise with the Head Teacher, the School Attendance Officer and, where necessary, parents. The team will aim to encourage attendance, to resolve any underlying problems, to discuss appropriate strategies and incentives with all concerned parties.

The Inclusion Adviser has the right to inspect registers in schools on a regular basis as well as to contact parents of children who have poor attendance. They can also pursue further investigations for children who have poor attendance through frequent or continual illness – usually via the school nurse or social services. Where, reluctantly, the use of enforcement processes are necessary then the school supports this.

The Head Teacher:

The Head Teacher will promote the attendance in assemblies on a weekly basis. Children achieving 100% attendance throughout the whole school year are congratulated and rewarded at the final assembly of the school year. Certificates and rewards are given out.

Truancy:

Truancy is currently not a problem at the TPS. However, if this is suspected, the parents and the Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team will be contacted immediately. Strategies will then be developed within the school/parent partnership to ensure that the underlying issues are addressed.