



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Date Ratified: 22nd June 2018

Review Date: 14th June 2019

Re-Ratification Date: June 2019 Signature: _____

TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This Policy operates in accordance with the framework and advice contained within the Medway guidance on achieving and maintaining high attendance, which the school and its Governing Body intend to follow.

AAP – Attendance Advisory Practitioners.
SIMS – School Information Management System
Dfe – Department for Education.

N.B The term ‘parent’ should also be taken to mean the person with care responsibilities.

Principles

- Regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school life
- It is important that children learn the importance of being punctual as part of their preparation for adult life
- It is the parent’s responsibility to contact the school on the first day of an absence
- The school and parents should work together in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to

- set out the ways by which attendance and punctuality are managed by the school
- set out the ways by which high attendance is promoted by the school
- clarify the role of the parents/carer

The School will:

- give attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe, and know that their presence is valued;
- raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality, using newsletters and other communications to parents;
- encourage parents to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child’s education;
- ensure that attendance is effectively monitored, using a computer based registration system, and absences are followed up promptly;
- communicate effectively with other agencies (Traveller Education, Health, Social Services etc.);
- meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence;
- ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality;
- ensure information is available for Governors and parents;
- ensure good liaison where a change of school occurs;
- develop incentives for good attendance and punctuality;
- share good practice with other schools;
- have procedures in place to help children settle in after a long absence.

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

We expect the parent / carer to:

- provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address;
- notify the school via the dedicated absence line when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on first day of the absence (follow up in writing);
- telephone the absence line after the first day of absence to advise the school if the absence is continuing, and each day thereafter;
- provide medical evidence if the absence is for 3 days or more; (this need only be evidence of an appointment or a prescription. NOT A DOCTORS LETTER).
- in cases of lengthy absence, keep the school well informed so that work can be sent home in certain cases and in order for the school to be prepared for the child's return;
- provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen;
- ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day;
- let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made;
- understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child.

Promoting and Maintaining High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

- All new parents are introduced to the Policy and information on attendance. It is accessible on the school website.
- The newsletter will promote messages of good attendance and class weekly attendance will be published
- The school will celebrate attendance through a weekly assembly.
 - The assembly will celebrate the class with the highest attendance for the week, and so far for the term.
 - The assembly will also celebrate the year group with the highest attendance for the week and the term so far.
 - The class with the highest attendance for the week will win the attendance Mascot for the week and will take photos of the mascot engaging in learning activities; these will be posted to the blog. (NB some weeks the mascot may go to an improving class to ensure that all have a chance).
- Children with 100% attendance termly and annually will receive a certificate and will have their picture displayed on the 100% attendance walls in the keystage 1 or keystage 2 halls
- Inclusion for all. Where a child has an EHCP plan for a physical disability that would require medical appointments related to this: these will not count as absences against the class nor will they count as absences against the 100% attendance. However, all other medical or dental appointments made within the school day, not related to a condition outlined in an EHCP plan will be marked as absences against the class' and against the child's records.
- Individual parents will be sent a letter if their child's attendance dips below 96% in the second term or if there is a concern about their child's attendance or punctuality. The letter will act as a reminder and are to support parents in improving the child's attendance in difficult circumstances.
- The school will maintain up to date records within the *SIMS* system.
- Liaise with the AAP during regular monitoring visits to identify attendance concerns.

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Supporting Parents and Managing Poor Attendance

The national target for attendance at school is 96%. Our school target for attendance is 96% in line with this. The following measures are in place to ensure that we meet the national target and by doing so ensure that our children receive the best start in life and the best opportunities in their education.

- Monitoring and referral - children's absences are monitored from the first day of school and any persistent absences or patterns of absence which cause concern will be referred to the AAP
- School procedures –
 - After terms 1 and 2, if a child's attendance falls below our target, without the school identifying good cause, we will issue 1 reminder letter followed by 2 warning letters please see below. The purpose of these letters is to maintain dialogue and a good relationship with parents to support the parents in improving the child's attendance before it has a negative effect on the child and to avoid legal measures.
 - If at any point a child's attendance drops below 85%, without an identifiable good cause, the concern will be referred immediately to the AAP for investigation.

Please see table below for school triggers from term 3 onwards. *

96%+	Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
Below 96%	Below expectations – this needs to be improved. Parents will receive a Reminder Letter to highlight that attendance has dropped and if persistent a phone call to discuss.
Below 96% and not improving or below 93%	Too far below expectations and your child's education could be affected. Parents will receive an Initial Warning Letter highlighting the persistent problem which requires rapid improvement. The school will work with those children and parents urgently to improve the situation and could refer the matter to the AAP to support.
Below 93% and not improving or below 90%	Poor absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. A meeting will be called with the parent, the AAP and Deputy Headteacher. A Final Warning Letter will be given to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outline the outcomes, action and support discussed at the meeting - Either to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate the concern that if the situation does not rapidly improve there is a possibility that legal sanctions will be sought which could end up with a fine 2. To confirm that legal actions will be sought which could result in a fine
Below 85%	Unacceptable – Absence is causing SERIOUS CONCERN . It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. The school and the AAP will continue to work with parents to urgently improve the situation. In this instance, the individual case will be reviewed where grounds for legal action are present and to be pursued or pursued at a higher level. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Only the school can 'authorise' absence. The school will not assess all reasons as 'valid'.

*NB: 1.The type of letter sent is determined by the trigger point. e.g a parent may receive a final warning letter without receiving a reminder letter or an initial warning letter, if the child is at that trigger point and it is deemed necessary.

TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE ATTENDANCE POLICY

2. Where there is cause for concern, i.e. when attendance is below 90% in any term, the reasons for this will be investigated and where appropriate, discussed with the AAP during one of their regular visits.

- Where absences are **unauthorised**....
 - Referral can be made to the AAP, where legal sanctions may be applied, in the usual manner.
 - Where 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) occur within a 6 week period, the school, at the Headteacher's discretion, can apply to the LA for the issuing of a **Penalty Notice**. * This application would be made after consultation with the AAP.

The offence of non – school attendance is absolute, and the legal requirement regarding evidence is simply that the child did not attend.

*** £120 fine for each adult / carer in the household if paid within 28 days.
£ 60 fine for each adult / carer in the household if paid within 21 days.**

Failure to pay will result in a summons to the magistrate court.

Magistrates courts have the following powers:

- The fine available to the courts if parents are found guilty of failing to secure the child's regular attendance is up to £1000
- The fine available to the courts if a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly, and fails to ensure the child does is at level 4, up to £2,500 and the court can also sentence them to imprisonment for up to three months.
- Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded from school. The fine is a level 3 fine of up to £1,000.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g. sickness, absence following the death of a close member of the family, attendance at an interview or examination, participation in a regional or national sporting event or an approved holiday (see below).

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised when:

- a child is kept off school because a parent is ill;
- a child is absent because a sibling is ill;
- the parent cannot get the child to school;
- the child is taken on a shopping trip;
- the child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat;
- a child is absent due to family work patterns;
- the child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home;

Each child's unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded on an annual report to parents.

It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences to the Local Authority and DfE.

The school will telephone the child's home to enquire about an absence if the parent has not contacted the school on the first day of absence. If a child has been absent without an explanation, parents will

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

be sent a letter. If no satisfactory response is received, a follow up reminder will be sent. Should this still result in a nil response, the absence will be marked unauthorised and the school will inform the AAP about the child's lack of attendance.

Illness

- If a child is ill the parents should call the absence line on the first day of illness and every day thereafter.
- When a child returns from a period of absence due to sickness, a letter must be provided by the parent and medical evidence, if it is for 3 days or more; (this need only be evidence of an appointment or a prescription. NOT A DOCTORS LETTER).
- school office may complete the daily absence report.
- **Vomiting and diarrhoea** (includes *E.coli* and Cryptosporidiosis)- NHS guidance advises that any child, who is off with vomiting and diarrhoea, should be kept off of school until at least 48 hours after symptoms have gone. Following this guidance, it is the policy of Twydall Primary School that children who have suffered with vomiting and diarrhoea would not be allowed to return to school until 48 hours after the symptoms have gone. The only exception to this would be, if vomiting can be attributed to another medical cause other than a stomach bug or virus e.g reflux.
- **Rashes and skin infections**- GOV guidance states 'Children with rashes should be considered infectious and assessed by their doctor'. See below table for specific details.

Infection or complaint	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or childminders	Comments
Athlete's foot	None	Athlete's foot is not a serious condition. Treatment is recommended
Chickenpox	Until all vesicles have crusted over	See: <i>Vulnerable Children and Female Staff – Pregnancy</i>
Cold sores, (Herpes simplex)	None	Avoid kissing and contact with the sores. Cold sores are generally mild and self-limiting
German measles (rubella)*	Four days from onset of rash (as per " <u>Green Book</u> ")	Preventable by immunisation (MMR x2 doses). See: <i>Female Staff – Pregnancy</i>
Hand, foot and mouth	None	Contact your local HPT if a large number of children are affected. Exclusion may be considered in some circumstances
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period
Measles*	Four days from onset of rash	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x2). See: <i>Vulnerable Children and Female Staff – Pregnancy</i>
Molluscum contagiosum	None	A self-limiting condition
Ringworm	Exclusion not usually required	Treatment is required
Roseola (infantum)	None	None
Scabies	Child can return after first treatment	Household and close contacts require treatment
Scarlet fever*	Child can return 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment is recommended for the affected child

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Slapped cheek/fifth disease. Parvovirus B19	None (once rash has developed)	<i>See: Vulnerable Children and Female Staff – Pregnancy</i>
Shingles	Exclude only if rash is weeping and cannot be covered	Can cause chickenpox in those who are not immune, ie have not had chickenpox. It is spread by very close contact and touch. If further information is required, contact your local PHE centre. <i>See: Vulnerable Children and Female Staff – Pregnancy</i>
Warts and verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gymnasiums and changing rooms

• **Respiratory infections:**

Infection or complaint	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or childminders	Comments
Flu (influenza)	Until recovered	<i>See: Vulnerable Children</i>
Tuberculosis*	Always consult your local PHE centre	Requires prolonged close contact for spread
Whooping cough* (pertussis)	Five days from starting antibiotic treatment, or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment	Preventable by vaccination. After treatment, non-infectious coughing may continue for many weeks. Your local PHE centre will organise any contact tracing necessary

• **Other infections:**

Infection or complaint	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or child minders	Comments
Conjunctivitis	None	If an outbreak/cluster occurs, consult your local PHE centre
Diphtheria *	Exclusion is essential. Always consult with your local HPT	Family contacts must be excluded until cleared to return by your local PHE centre. Preventable by vaccination. Your local PHE centre will organise any contact tracing necessary
Glandular fever	None	
Head lice	None	Treatment is recommended only in cases where live lice have been seen
Hepatitis A*	Exclude until seven days after onset of jaundice (or seven days after symptom onset if no jaundice)	In an outbreak of hepatitis A, your local PHE centre will advise on control measures

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Hepatitis B*, C*, HIV/AIDS	None	Hepatitis B and C and HIV are bloodborne viruses that are not infectious through casual contact. For cleaning of body fluid spills see: <i>Good Hygiene Practice</i>
Meningococcal meningitis*/ septicaemia*	Until recovered	Meningitis C is preventable by vaccination. There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. In case of an outbreak, it may be necessary to provide antibiotics with or without meningococcal vaccination to close school contacts. Your local PHE centre will advise on any action is needed
Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered	Hib and pneumococcal meningitis are preventable by vaccination. There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. Your local PHE centre will give advice on any action needed
Meningitis viral*	None	Milder illness. There is no reason to exclude siblings and other close contacts of a case. Contact tracing is not required
MRSA	None	Good hygiene, in particular handwashing and environmental cleaning, are important to minimise any danger of spread. If further information is required, contact your local PHE centre
Mumps*	Exclude child for five days after onset of swelling	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x2 doses)
Threadworms	None	Treatment is recommended for the child and household contacts
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes, but most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic

Medical Appointments

- If a child needs to be absent for a medical appointment a note must be received by the class teacher or office before the appointment. The class teacher dates and signs all letters.
- Parents must sign their child/ren out and back in again when attending appointments during the school day.
- A log is kept of the medical appointment.
- Parents should come to the office, where the office staff will contact the classroom and ask that the child comes down to reception to meet their parent/carer.
- If a child has an appointment in a morning or afternoon session and does not attend school for the other session, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless it has been agreed with the Headteacher.

Requests for Leave of absence

It should be noted that leave during term time is only granted in extenuating circumstances. There is no parental right to a ten day period.

£120 fine for each adult / carer in the household if paid within 28 days.

£ 60 fine for each adult / carer in the household if paid within 21 days.

TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents are asked to support the school with its aims and not to take their children away from school during term time.

Parents have no right to demand that absences are authorised. (Regulation 8 of the Education Regulations 1995 applies).

If a pupil goes on holiday without permission from the Headteacher, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the AAP will be informed and a fixed penalty notice could be issued.

Lateness

The school day begins at 8.40am in the upper school and 8.55am for the lower school and the register will be taken immediately. Children arriving after 8.50am (upper school) and 8.55am (lower school) **MUST** report to the school office. Registers close at 9.20am (upper school) and 9.25am (lower school) and any child who arrives after this will be registered as an unauthorised late.

Lateness not only interrupts the child's education, but also that of others in the class. If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know. Parents of children who persistently arrive late will be reminded of these times and their obligation to comply with them.

Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the APP and/or Social Services where relevant.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a note will be sent home asking the parent to explain the lateness or to ensure that punctuality is maintained. In rare circumstances where the school is made aware of a situation, an arrangement allowing a degree of flexibility can be agreed with the Headteacher.

Monitoring

The Headteacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters.

All staff will be expected to comply with the policy and any issues will be discussed at staff meetings.

The School has regular meetings with the APP to discuss concerns and review absence data.

This policy was formally adopted on 22nd June 2015.

Registers

The method of maintaining the class registers is through the *SIMS* Attendance Module. Class teachers complete a registration sheet twice daily and return it to the office.

Weekly absence reports are printed and reasons for absence recorded using the relevant codes.

M	:	medical or dental appointments	authorised
I	:	illness	authorised
L	:	late before registers closed	authorised
U	:	late after registers closed	unauthorised
C	:	other authorised circumstances (exceptional)	authorised
H	:	family holiday (exceptional circumstances)	authorised
G	:	family holiday not agreed	unauthorised
N	:	no reason yet provided for absence	unauthorised
V	:	educational visit or trip	authorised
R	:	religious activities	authorised

**TWYDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

E	:	exclusion	authorised
O	:	unauthorised absence not covered by above	unauthorised

Roles/Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

Ratifying and reviewing the school Attendance Policy

The Head teacher is responsible for:

Implementing the Attendance Policy.

Ensuring that the policy is notified to all staff and complied with at all levels.

Ensuring that the policy is made available to parents/carers /partners who request to read it.

Ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed and where necessary revised.

The School Office and Family Liaison Officer is responsible for:

Receiving, recording and passing on telephone messages (i.e. reasons for absence).

Keeping an accurate attendance register daily.

Reporting regularly to the Headteacher.

Contacting parents /carers by text on the first day of absence.

Producing Attendance Figures.

Sending letters to parents regarding attendance / punctuality.

Completing paperwork for attendance clinics.

Updating the school attendance board.

Policy ratification and review

Support for pupils and families

Meet with the AAP and keep a record of the meeting.

Arrange attendance clinics where necessary.

Liaise with parents and carers where appropriate.

Liaise with staff regarding matters of attendance / punctuality.

Liaise with other schools where there are concerns around individual children

Class teachers are responsible for:

Notifying attendance and punctuality concerns to the school office and Family Liaison Officer.

Reporting reasons for absence to the attendance officer.

Celebrating good attendance.

Ensuring the attendance register is completed correctly.

All staff are responsible for:

Supporting and implementing the policy.

Ensuring reasons for absence that they are aware of are recorded in the register and reported to the school office and Family Liaison Officer.