



Achieve

Believe

Care



Attendance Policy

1. Statement of Intent

Tenterden Church of England Junior School and Tenterden Infant School are committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Executive Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at our school.

2. Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school and arrives on time. Full attendance is essential to the all round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 08.50am (Junior School) 08.55am (Infant School). All pupils who arrive late need to report, with a parent to the school office, where the reason for lateness will be recorded.

3. The Role of the School Staff

The Team leading on attendance support and monitoring for the Tenterden Primary Federation are Samantha Crinnion Executive Headteacher, has overall responsibility for attendance, the deputy headteachers of both schools, assistant headteacher of the Junior School, school SENCO and The Family Support Manager.

The Family Support Manager is leading the implementation of Project 95 actions across the Federation from December 2017 onwards. This project will put the following actions in place to support families, where attendance may be a concern:

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. Registers close at 9:20am. After this time children will be marked as absent.

The class teacher notifies a member of the Attendance Team, of children whose attendance is causing concern. In addition the Attendance Team will review attendance of all pupils regularly through safeguarding meetings.

The Executive Headteacher has put in place a monitoring action that will review overall attendance of all children every term, which will then be reported back to the Local Governing Body termly and the Tenterden Schools Trust, Executive Trust Board three times a year.

It is the responsibility of office staff team to do the following:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by 10am
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a seven day reply deadline before the absence is unauthorised
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)
- Parents informed termly (seasonal) of child's attendance figure

4. School Action Steps for Low Attendance- Project 95

<i>FSM/Head Teacher/Deputy Heads to look at the attendance of identified pupils and Letter 1 sent out (invitation to attend initial meeting)</i>
<i>FSM to arrange attendance appointment day meetings</i>
<i>Head Teacher to send out Letter 2 (failure to attend and second invitation to meet with FSM and Head Teacher / Deputy Head). Project 95 meeting record to be completed, agreed and signed. Copy to all parties attending meeting (including parents/carers even if they do not attend).</i>
<i>If meeting is not attended after Letter 2 and the offer of a 2nd appointment, send out Letter 3 requesting medical evidence and possibility of referring to Local Authority. Again, record and send a copy to the Parents/Carers with Letter 3.</i>
<i>Monitor weekly and implement usual procedures for any pupils who fail to improve or make sufficient improvement</i>
<i>Progress to be recorded on spreadsheet on a regular basis</i>

- 95 - 100% attendance – Office staff to investigate and notify Executive Headteacher of concerns
- 90 - 95% attendance - monitored through monthly attendance safeguarding meetings. Where attendance is not improving, Project 95 actions (above) will be implemented.
- Below 90% flags as serious cause for concern.

5. Children Missing Education

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Executive Headteacher and the Attendance and Behaviour Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance should be followed.

6. Lateness

At Tenterden Church of England Junior School the register is taken at 08.55 am and 1.35 pm. At Tenterden Infant School the register is taken at 9.00 am and 1.00pm. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L').

The morning register will close at 09.20 am at the Junior school and Infant School. The afternoon register will close at 1:20pm in The Infant School and school and

1:50pm in the Junior School pm. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised absence (Code 'U').

Persistent unauthorised absence can provide grounds for prosecution or Penalty Notice.

7. Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed in a term may lead to a referral to the Attendance and Behaviour Service (ABS) for a Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days of issue, ABS may instigate court proceedings

8. Authorising Absence

Only the Executive Headteacher can authorise absence for approved reasons. Where there is doubt, the Executive Headteacher, on behalf of the Local Governing Body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Executive Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent and school.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates

- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday/other family events
- Shopping trip

9. Attendance and Lateness

If a new pupil has a history of poor attendance at their previous school, there will be a pre-start attendance meeting held. The school has a 'five-step' approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all of these steps or even to carry them out in the order listed. Responsible staff will use discretion and discuss each case carefully.

Reasons for absence are recorded and retained by the school. When a referral to EWO is made, the administrator's log (SIMS) and school attendance meeting minutes will be available as evidence.

10. Local Authority Action

Where there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance and/or there is at least 10 sessions (5 days) absence in a term the school will consider the following:

Education Welfare Officer Referral

This may include:

- Home visits,
- multi agency meetings
- sign posting to supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services and Family Group Conference Service.

Penalty Notice Referral

- The Attendance and Behaviour Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 42 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 28 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 42 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

12. Leave of Absence/Holiday

Time off school for family holidays is not a right. Schools have discretion to allow up to 10 days absence in a school year for holiday leave in special circumstances such as:

- For Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education;
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

Agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Local Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits in line with the criteria outlined above.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case will be referred to the Attendance and Behaviour Service who will issue a Penalty Notice for £100 (or £50 if paid within 28 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

13. Penalty Notice Proceedings for Unauthorised Holiday Absence

- ABS receives a referral for an unauthorised holiday of 10 or more school sessions (5 days)
- ABS issue Penalty Notice(s) (one per parent per child)

- If Penalty Notice(s) is/are not paid within 42 days of issue, ABS may instigate court proceedings

14. Monitoring, Review and Effectiveness of Policy

The Executive Headteacher has responsibility for the day to day operation of this policy and reports to the Local Governing Body. The Governing Body will review and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.

Date approved: January 2018

Review due: January 2020

Appendix 1

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR PUPIL ANNUAL HOLIDAY FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

PLEASE READ THESE CONDITIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETION

There is no legal right to take your child out of school for holiday

There are 13 weeks available for family holidays when the school is closed. We do not want you to take your child out of school, or take holiday during term time. Only 2 weeks (10 school days) may (but not necessarily will) be authorised in any school year (Sept-July). This is for **the annual family holiday only** when it is impossible to be taken during school holidays. You must ask the school to agree the absence **before booking the holiday**. Agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Local Governing Body (Pupil Registration Regulations 1995 – amended 1997) and will only be granted if attendance for individual children is above 95%. Each case will be judged on its merits in line with certain considerations as outlined in guidance from the Local Authority and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCFS). School will not agree to your child missing exams and assessments in September and May. Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's education progress.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case will be referred to the Attendance and Behaviour Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 28 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

NAME OF CHILD(REN):

CLASS:

Date of first day of absence: _____

Date of return to school: _____

Number of days requested absent from school: _____ **(max 10)**

Reason for holiday to be taking during term time:

I have read and understood the conditions above for this application: †

Signed: _____ **(Parent/Guardian)**

Name: _____ **Date:**



Tenterden C of E Junior School. Absence from school approved for:

Child(ren): _____

Dates _____ **Signed**

Executive Headteacher
Application for Leave

Appendix 2

Dear «Name»

I refer to your application for «name» to be absent for «no:» days for a family holiday.

Time off school for family holidays is not a right. Schools have discretion to allow up to 10 days absence in a school year for holiday leave in special circumstances such as:

- for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term – time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education;
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

I have carefully considered your request but it does not meet the criteria set out above and on this particular occasion I am unable to authorise «name»'s absence. I must warn you that if you do take your child out of school for this time the Attendance and Behaviour Service will issue a penalty notice of £100 to each parent for each child, reduced to £50 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale, the Attendance and Behaviour Service will institute legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child/children attend(s) school regularly.

The matter will also be recorded on your child/children's school record.

If you would like to meet with me to discuss this matter, please contact me to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 3

Date

Address

Dear Parental salutation

Pupil Name:

DOB:

I am writing to inform you that (name) has arrived late for school on xx occasions between xxx and xxx This is clearly unsatisfactory and I must bring it to your attention that you have a legal responsibility to ensure name arrives at school on time.

(name)'s punctuality will be monitored and if there is no improvement further action will be considered.

Yours sincerely

Ms. S Crinnion

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 4

Dear «Name»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «Name» has been late to school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «Name» was late.

At «Name» school the register is taken at «Time» am and at «Time» pm.

A pupil's lateness during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning, not only do they miss out on teaching but are less prepared for future lessons. This leads to a high risk of under achievement which we must all seek to avoid.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us. Should «Name»'s punctuality however continue to be a cause for concern I will need to inform the school's Education Welfare Officer.

Yours sincerely,

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 5

date

address

Dear Parental salutation

Pupil Name:

DOB:

Further to my letter of xxxxx I am writing again as (name) is continuing to arrive late for school on a regular basis. This is clearly unsatisfactory and I must bring it to your attention that you have a legal responsibility to ensure name arrives at school on time.

Please could you contact me to arrange an appointment so we can discuss name's lateness and any problems she is experiencing at school.

Failure to do this could result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Crinnion

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 6

Date

Address

Dear parental salutation

Pupil Name:

DOB:

Further to previous letters I am writing again as (name) is continuing to arrive late for school on a regular basis. This is clearly unsatisfactory and I must bring it to your attention that you have a legal responsibility to ensure (name) arrives at school on time.

Please could you contact me to arrange an appointment so we can discuss name's lateness and any problems she is experiencing at school.

Failure to do this could result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.

Yours sincerely

Ms. S Crinnion

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 7

Dear «name»

Pupil Name: «Name»

DOB: «DOB»

I am writing to inform you that as «Name»'s attendance is still poor and no improvement has been made since our meeting on «Date», I will be referring «Name» to the Education Welfare Officer, Laura Breck, if you have any questions regarding this please do not hesitate to contact me.

Appendix 8

Dear Parent/Carer

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence

From February 2005, **Kent Local Authority (LA)** introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) in a current term.

As you can see from the above we take this opportunity to remind parents (in a non-threatening way) the expectations placed upon schools from now on. Please therefore continue to read the letter and we appreciate your support in this initiative.

The following circumstances will be considered as appropriate reasons for the issuing Penalty Notices:

- Truancy including truancy sweeps
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Holidays in term time
- Delayed return from extended holidays
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £100 reduced to £50 if paid within 28 days.

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 42 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

At «Name» School we consider attendance and these new legal powers very important, this is why we are bringing this to your attention.

Please ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.

Yours sincerely

Executive Headteacher

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 SECTION 23 PENALTY
NOTICE FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE £50 PENALTY IF PAID
WITHIN 28 DAYS £100 PENALTY IF PAID AFTER 28 DAYS BUT
WITHIN 42 DAYS

Appendix 9

Dear

Re (Child's Name)

At School we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that **(Child's name)** has been absent from school for a total of () unauthorised sessions (**days**). In this regard I refer you to legislation regarding Penalty Notices.

'As from April 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) in a current term.'

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £100, reduced to £50 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 42 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

Please note this is a warning letter that a Penalty Notice could be requested if a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) are reached in a current term.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact on

Yours sincerely

Executive Headteacher

School based absence intervention

