



Attendance Policy

Please note that 'Headteacher' may refer to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. 'Chair of Governing Body' may refer to Co-Chairs of the Governing Body.

Reviewed by:	Full Governing Body
Reviewed when	July 2023
Next review	July 2025
Source and date of model policy, if applicable	n/a
Added to website (if applicable)	Yes
Added to Google Drive	Yes
Review date noted on schedule	Yes

1. This policy has regard to DfE guidance – Working together to improve school attendance September 2022
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

2. **Aims and Objectives – Our policy aims to**

- Emphasise the importance to all children and families that maximum attendance at school is vital for achieving their full potential.
- Reinforce the notion that every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled and that parents are responsible in law for the regular and punctual attendance of their child.
- Make explicit to all (children, parents/carers and teachers) the Federation’s expectations on attendance levels and support strategies to help children maximise their attendance.
- Stress the need for home and school to work in partnership to achieve high attendance.
- Promote a consistent approach across the Federation towards attendance matters.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties linked to attendance at school and in the local authority.

The Trumpington Federation sees 95% attendance as the minimum expectation for all children and strives for all children to attend more than 97%. The Heads of School hold overall responsibility for championing and improving school attendance but this is a high priority for all school staff.

Commented [1]: I thought the DfE suggest we aim for 96%

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulation 2016 make clear that headteachers may not authorise holidays (or other leave of absence) in term time therefore at the Trumpington Federation we **DO NOT** authorise holidays during term time. The Trumpington Federation upholds these regulations and supports the use of financial penalties and court action where necessary.

3. **Procedures and Practices**

School day timings

- Reception – 8.45am to 3.15pm
- Year 1 to 6 – 8.40am to 3.10pm

Gates

School gates will open at 8.30am (Fawcett) and 8.35am (Trumpington Meadows) and close at 8.50am

Registration

Roll call registration (electronic) takes place twice a day: at 8:40am for Years 1 to 6 and 8.45am for Reception and again at 12.40pm for Reception and 1:00pm for Years 1 to 6.

Lateness

Registration closes at 8.50am. Any student arriving in school after the registration period closes will be recorded as 'L' (late). If they arrive after 9.15am they will be recorded as 'U' (unauthorised absence). Unauthorised absence at the beginning of the day is particularly damaging to a child's academic and social progress and for this reason will be treated very seriously.

Absences

Absences from school will be either authorised or unauthorised depending upon circumstance.

Authorised absences are where a student has been absent and a satisfactory and legal reason has been communicated to the school via the office. Reasons include

- genuine illness
- days of religious observance
- unavoidable medical appointments
- exceptional circumstances (bereavement/marriage of immediate family member).

The Federation expects authorised absences to be kept to a minimum and therefore routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours or during school holidays wherever possible. Where absence through illness has occurred parents/carers may be expected to provide evidence of illness and/or appointments upon request.

Unauthorised absences are when no letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents/carers or the reason provided is not deemed as acceptable by the Federation. Examples of these may be:

- lateness after 9.15am
- attending a birthday celebration
- minding a house

- caring for a sibling
- shopping or going on holiday

Absences may also be unauthorised when a child's attendance is below 80% and the school has requested medical evidence which has not been provided.

The Trumpington Federation, using DfE guidelines, makes the final decision about whether or not any absence is seen as authorised or unauthorised. Parents who wish to request absence may do so by completing an absence request form (available from either school office or the Federation website) and returning it to the school office. Completion of an absence request does not guarantee an authorisation.

Term-Time holidays

The Trumpington Federation will not authorise holiday during term time.

Unauthorised term time leave and penalty notices

Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave of six or more consecutive sessions (a session is a morning or afternoon) over a four week period, not authorised by the Federation (under the exceptional circumstances rule), will receive a Penalty Notice.

Reporting and rewarding good attendance

Attendance is reported to parents/carers annually, as part of each child's school report.

The Federation promotes good attendance at school through weekly assemblies where classes earn rewards for good attendance at school and termly certificates are awarded to children with 100% or a rapid improvement in attendance. We do not exclude children from rewards where they are unable to attend due to i.e. ongoing medical issues.

4. Strategies used to support and improve attendance at school

Children must attend regularly (minimum of 95%) and punctually (by 8:40am).

Studybugs Is a new app that parents are encouraged to use to record their child's attendance at school – it can also be used to facilitate communication between parents and children and will be used by the school to identify trends in attendance. At the end of this policy is guidance on how to sign up for Studybugs and more information can be found here:

<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>

Parents

Parents/carers (or whichever adult the child lives or is staying with) are legally responsible for the child's attendance at school and must ensure that children attend, regularly, on time, in correct

uniform and with correct equipment. They could be subject to criminal prosecution should their child's attendance fall below acceptable levels.

We expect parents to;

- Contact school on or before the first day of their child's absence to notify of the absence, and on each day of absence. This can most easily be done through the Studybugs app that all parents are encouraged to sign up for but can also be communicated via the telephone or email. This must be done by 8.30am.
- Provide satisfactory medical evidence when required to do so.
- Attend attendance planning meetings when requested to do so.
- Sign children in/out if arriving/leaving at different times during the school day.

If parents would like to discuss day-to-day attendance, they should discuss this with their child's class teacher in the first instance. If they would like more detailed support, then they can contact the office who will put them in touch with the Family Partnership Worker or another appropriate member of staff.

School

School will:

- Roll call registration twice a day (am and pm)
- Contact the parent/carer by telephone or text on the first day of absence if no notification is received. Where attendance is causing concern the school will contact families on a daily basis whilst a child is off sick.
- Monitor attendance on a weekly, monthly and half termly basis and identify any patterns and themes being presented through pupil attendance, including through comparison with national data.
- Monitor punctuality and address ongoing punctuality issues with parents.
- Use the three letter system to communicate with parents highlighting absence and requesting explanations.
- Investigate unexplained absences (if no satisfactory evidence is received within five days, the absence will remain recorded as unauthorised).
- Address persistent absence by holding attendance planning meetings to discuss how school can support parents/carers to improve attendance and to set targets.

- Include attendance information on progress reports.
- Identify when attendance falls below 90% and monitor, providing support for parents where necessary.
- Write to parents requesting their attendance at planning meetings and parenting contract meetings as appropriate.
- Hold planning meetings with schools and parents to assist with the planning to meet attendance targets.
- Carry out home visits when appropriate.
- Support parents in seeking wider support, possibly through external agencies, to remove barriers to school attendance.
- Enact Children Missing in Education (CME) procedures if necessary, which may include contacting the police or social care.

The Local Authority (LA)

The local authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) holds the statutory responsibility for school attendance for pupils in all Cambridgeshire schools. Local Authority Attendance Officers (LAAOs) act on behalf of the LA to promote attendance and in partnership with schools, enforce attendance through the use of legal sanctions when necessary.

The Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) will:

- Organise target support meetings.
- Hold planning meetings with schools and parents to assist with the planning to meet attendance targets.
- Carry out home visits when appropriate.
- Carry out assessments and broker supportive interventions from a range of external agencies such as the locality team (family work, youth support) when necessary.
- Request the imposition of legal sanctions such as penalty notices, parent contracts, education attendance orders and fines.

5. Additional information

Links to other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection

Useful guidance and websites

Further guidance relating to attendance is recommended to all staff, parents/carers and governors

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/education-your-rights-and-responsibilities/school-attendance>

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – School Register Codes

Appendix 2 – Term Time Holiday information

Appendix 3 – Attendance process diagrams

Appendix 1 – School Register codes

The DfE offers a comprehensive set of register codes which all schools are required to use. These codes are as follows:

- / \ - Present am/pm
- B - Educated off site - Approved Educational Activity.
- C - Other authorised circumstances (including public performances licensed by the local authority, family bereavements, exceptional special occasions) - Authorised Absence.
- D - Dual registration (i.e pupil attending other establishment) - Approved Educational Activity.
- E - Excluded (no alternative provision made) - Authorised Absence.
- F - Extended family holiday (agreed) - Authorised Absence.
- G - Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement) - Unauthorised Absence.
- H - Family holiday during term-time (provided this has been agreed by the school) - Authorised Absence.
- I - Illness (not medical/dental appointments) - Authorised Absence.
- J - Interview - Approved Educational Activity.
- L - Late (before registers close) - Present.
- M - Medical/Dental appointments - Authorised Absence.
- N - No reason yet provided for absence - Unauthorised Absence.
- O - Unauthorised Absence.
- P - Approved Sporting Activity - Approved Educational Activity.
- R - Religious Observance - Authorised Absence.
- S - Study Leave - Authorised Absence.
- T - Traveller child travelling - Authorised Absence.
- U - Late after registers close without an acceptable explanation - Unauthorised Absence
- V - Educational visit or trip - Approved Educational Activity.
- W - Work Experience - Approved Educational Activity.
- X - Non-compulsory school age absence - not counted in possible attendances.
- Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Z - Pupil not yet on roll
- # - School closed – not counted in possible attendance.

Class teachers are only required to use a limited number of the codes. Advice should be taken before entering codes other than those on the default settings via the electronic registration system.

Appendix 2 - Information about Term Time Holidays

The following information has been taken directly from the Cambridgeshire County Council website

Term time holidays

Children of school age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Regular attendance is the best way of ensuring that a child makes the most of the educational opportunities which are available to him or her.

When a child is absent from school, he or she misses not only the teaching provided but is also less prepared for the lessons after his or her return.

There are only 190 statutory school days in one year and 175 days (weekends and school holidays) available to use for holidays. Therefore every school day counts!

Key information

Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 regulations remove references to family holidays and extended leave. The amendments make it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.

Your rights and responsibilities

If your child is registered at school you must ensure that s/he attends regularly.

The regulations make it clear that parents, carers or relatives do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term time holiday.

If parents take their child on holiday in term time this will be counted as unauthorised absence - this is the same as truancy and you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice being applied. Please see the Cambridgeshire County Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct on the Trumpington Federation website or via <https://ccc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/7.1%20-%20Penalty%20Notice%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20November%202018.pdf?inline=true>.

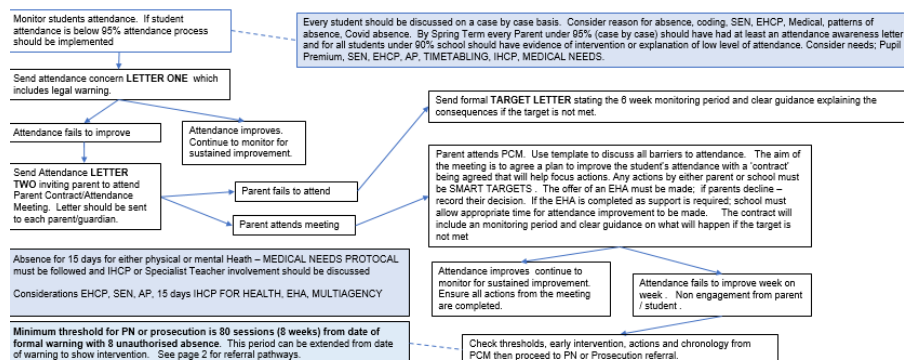
What you can do

Speak to your school directly if you feel you need to take your child out of school in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 3 – Attendance Process Maps

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCESS. Process map to be used in conjunction with 'Step by Step – Early Interventions and Referral Process – September 2020'

Schools should ensure they develop their strategic and systemic approach to manage overall attendance. However the need for schools to be vigilant and able to meet the individual needs of the child and family is important and needs to be part of the systemic approach. Schools should have their own thresholds for taking action where attendance becomes a concern. Avoid waiting for a child's attendance to slip to 90% or below (the persistent absence threshold). The Attendance Service recommends implementing a step by step process for early intervention prior to referrals to our service for legal sanctions to be applied.



Appendix 4 – Sample attendance letters

Initial letter

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx School: xxx

At the Trumpington Federation, attendance is one of our top priorities and we have noticed that your child <forename> attendance has deteriorated, I have enclosed a copy of <forename>'s attendance record so that you can view a detailed breakdown of your child's absence from school.

Research shows that regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have a significant impact on pupil learning. Evidence has shown that children who miss over 10% of the school year are significantly less likely to achieve the expected standard by the age of Year 6, or to achieve 5 good GCSEs, compared to children who have attendance above 95%. Also, as I am sure you are aware, it is a parent's legal duty to ensure their child has regular attendance at school and the government currently defines '**persistent absence**' as attendance below 90%.

We are all mindful of the impact of COVID, however it is now the expectation that the federation follows the normal attendance procedures. We aspire for all children to attend school as many days as possible due to the importance this has for their learning and future life chances.

We will continue to monitor <forename>'s attendance with the intention of seeing an improvement in their attendance. If the absence is due to a medical reason, please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

Please do get in touch if there are any particular circumstances, that the school may not be aware of, which is having an influence on <forename> attending school regularly as we may be able to offer some support. Furthermore, do contact the office if you would like to discuss any issues related to attendance further.

Yours sincerely

Enc Record of attendance

School Attendance Leaflet

Letter 1

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Name of pupil Dob: School:

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If possible, and again if it is medical please ensure we have relevant doctor's notes and appointment details.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

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Yours sincerely

cc Education Welfare Officer – *(for information only and to be available on request)*

Enc Record of attendance / School Attendance Leaflet

Letter 2 - targets

Date

Name

Address

Re: child Dob:

Dear

I am writing to inform you that CHILD's attendance is still causing concern. We are very concerned that continued poor attendance is affecting CHILD's progress. We are obviously understanding of illness; however we have been advised by the Education Welfare Officer to notify parents when their child's attendance has fallen below 96%.

As I am sure you are aware, it is important that your child maintains regular school attendance as any absence could interrupt their academic progress and may have an effect on maintaining friendships. You should also be aware that regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and that medical evidence is now required for any future absences to be authorised. We are happy to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have so that we can continue to support our pupils in making good progress. In the meantime please be aware of the following targets for CHILD:

- 90% or above attendance target over the monitoring period (DATE to DATE)
- Parent to supply medical evidence to explain absences due to illness
- Student is expected to arrive punctually at 8.40 am ready to learn.

We expect you to ensure that your child attends school as which he/she is registered. Therefore, if the attendance is not 90% or above over the 6 weeks monitoring period then you are at risk of a Penalty Notice or prosecution under Section 444/4441(A) of the Education Act 1996. If targets are not met or unlikely to be met then case is likely to proceed to enforcement actions.

It is important if you have any questions or queries please contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

CC Education Welfare Officer Encs Record of Attendance & School Attendance Leaflet

Letter 2 – meeting

Date

Name and address of parent

Re: Pupil Dob: School:

Dear

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is causing concern and we are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting their progress. We are obviously understanding of illness, however we have been advised by the Education Welfare Officer to notify parents when their child's attendance has fallen below 96%.

As I am sure you are aware, it is important that your child maintains regular school attendance as any absence could interrupt their academic progress and may have an effect on maintaining friendships. You should also be aware that regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and that medical evidence is now required for any future absences to be authorised. We would like to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have so that we can continue to support our pupils in making good progress.

You are required to attend a meeting with a member of the Attendance Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date: **Time:**

Your child's attendance will continue to be monitored throughout this term and it is hoped that you will support us by making every reasonable attempt to ensure your child is in school. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

cc Education Welfare Officer – *(for information only and to be available on request)*
Enc Record of attendance
School Attendance Leaflet

Letter 3

Dear xxx

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx School:

As the Attendance Officer for xxx, it has been brought to my attention that xxx has been absent from school for xxx sessions this school year/over the previous xxx weeks. I enclose a record of XXX's attendance.

As parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually.

With effect from September 2015 schools have been advised by the government's Department for Education (DfE) that the Persistent Absence (PA) threshold will be reduced to 10%. Until this date it has been 15%.

This means that if a child/young person has an overall attendance of 90% or less over a given period, they will be classified as a persistent absentee pupil.

I am therefore writing to inform you that if attendance fails to improve during the next (4) weeks, the case may be referred to Cambridgeshire County Council for a Penalty Notice fine to be issued.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Record of attendance

Appendix 5 – Studybugs



Please get the **free Studybugs app** for reporting your child's absence due to illness.

<https://studybugs.com>

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play | Get it from Microsoft

Report sickness, receive guidance, help improve children's health
See what illnesses are going around
Secure system, all communications encrypted

Working in partnership with:
NHS | Brighton and Sussex medical school | Brighton & Hove City Council | EPT School

Studybugs 