



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

For a child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital that they attend school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work.

Wilton Primary Academy and Tees Valley Education Trust (TVED) is committed to providing an education of the highest quality and endeavours to provide an environment where all young people feel valued and welcome. Parents/carers, pupils and the wider community all play a part in making each academy within TVED successful. Every child has the right to access the full education to which they are entitled.

As a trust we strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity is taken to convey to the children and their families, the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are responsible for making sure that young people of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a young person of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Parents / carers are primarily responsible for ensuring their school-registered child attends every day. Where attendance problems occur, appropriate and effective case management will take place. This will be bespoke to each case and may include a range of collaborative working between the pupil, parent, academy, wider school community and Local Authority services.

Parents / carers are expected to follow attendance procedures within their child's academy. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the academy and are expected to notify the academy of the reason for any of their child's absences. Families are also encouraged to speak to academy staff with any areas of concern around attendance so that these can be addressed promptly.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones the school or writes a note to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a pupil out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.



Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without good reason (i.e. without the permission of the school) even if the parent is supporting the absence.

If a child is absent

When a pupil is absent, the class teacher records the absence using the register which informs the Academy Business Manager/Academy Administrator, who endeavours to contact a parent or carer as soon as possible.

Parents or carers are encouraged to telephone the school by 9.30am on the first day of non-attendance. If contact has not been made, the Business Manager/Administrator will telephone the home to find out why a pupil is absent.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has medical appointment.

Requests for leave of absence

We believe that pupils need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are **really exceptional** circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence, we expect parents to contact the school at least four weeks in advance to make this request in writing. An absence request form is available from the school office for this purpose.

From September 2013, parents no longer have the right to request leave of absence for their child for an annual holiday. The amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make clear that Head teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. We use the following guidelines to decide whether such requests for absence will be granted:

- Permission will **not** be given for any time in September.
- Permission will **not** be given for any pupil whose attendance was below 95% in the previous 12 months.
- Permission will **not** be given to any pupils in Year 2 or Year 6 during formal assessment periods in May.
- Permission will **not** be given for a child unless the circumstances are **really exceptional**.

Long-term absence

When a pupil has an illness that means they will be away from school for an extended period, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work, if appropriate.

If the absence is likely to continue for a greatly extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the pupil to be given some tuition outside school.

Work will **not** be provided for pupils who are absent due to holidays.



Repeated absences

The school regularly monitors the attendance and punctuality of all pupils. The Head of Academy may send a letter, or telephone the parent or carer, or may visit the home to ensure that they understand the seriousness of the situation.

The Local Academy Committee (LAC), supported by the Local Authority, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who take their child out of school when the absence has not been authorised and/or who fail to provide proof of regular absences and/or repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Rewards for good attendance

Good attendance and punctuality are rewarded on a termly basis. All pupils who have achieved 95% or above attendance, in any one term, qualify for an attendance award. There is a reward for any pupil who has 100% across the term and a special attendance award for any child who achieves this across the whole year.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the LAC to monitor overall attendance. The Head of Academy reports to the Governing Body on attendance issues in the termly report.

Class teachers, the school Business Manager and the Head of Academy collectively monitor attendance. If the class teacher is concerned about a pupil's absence, they contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular pupil, this will be reported to the Head of Academy.

A detailed report on each pupil's attendance is included with their annual report in order to keep their parent or carer fully informed, as well as attendance figures being available via ESchools.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Date of Implementation: September 2019