



Telford Infant School

LOVING LEARNING

Every child to be an inquisitive, resilient and successful learner who is eager for their next challenge.

Attendance Policy

Manager:	Headteacher
Date of latest update:	January 2018
Date of next review:	January 2020

*This Policy is available for Staff and Governors on the Learning Platform.
It is also available for parents on the school website and on request from the school office.*

BACKGROUND

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance provided by the Department for Education.

Telford Infant School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each child to realise their full potential.

The school provides a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

AIMS

At Telford Infant School, through the implementation of this policy, we aim to achieve good attendance, by:

- creating a stimulating and exciting learning environment which fosters a desire in children not to want to miss a single day of their schooling;
- informing parents of their own legal responsibility and school policy;
- supporting teachers and school management in promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality;
- working in partnership with external agencies.

1. Absence from School

Only the school in the context of the law can approve absence not parents. The fact that a parent has offered a note, phoned, or made personal contact in relation to a particular absence, does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it.

2. School Procedures relating to Absence

- In the case of absence due to illness, medical or dental appointments a parent or carer must notify the school in person or by a telephone call before the beginning of the school day.
- If a child is not present at registration and no explanation has been given then a phone call will be made to the child's parents/carers by the school office to confirm their whereabouts and safety.
- If the school has received no reason for a child's absence it will attempt to contact by a phone call before the absence is marked as unauthorised.
- If a child is collected by their parent/carers from the school after registration then this must be recorded in the Signing Out Log, which is located in the school office. The child's re-entry after the appointment should also be recorded.
- The decision to phone parents to collect children when a child is feeling unwell is made by the Class teacher / Headteacher and will depend on individual cases.
- The parent of any child who goes home to lunch and does not return to school after lunch should contact the school by the end of lunchtime giving the reason for the afternoon absence.
- Parents are asked not to return their children to school until they have **fully** recovered from the illness that has caused the absence.

3. Lateness

- A child arriving late at school seriously disrupts not only his or her own learning but also that of others. Exceptional circumstances occasionally arise and these should be discussed with the Class teacher or Headteacher.
- Children are able to enter their classroom between 8.45am and 8.55am in order to prepare themselves for the school day. A bell rings at 8.55am when external classroom doors are closed. Any child arriving after this time is marked late.
- If a child arrives late after registers are closed (9.15am), with no adequate explanation, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- The school gates are closed by the Site Manager as soon after 8.55 a.m. as is possible and always by 9.15 a.m. at the latest. All children late after the 8.55am bell rings are to be brought to the school office where a member of staff will ensure that their parent or carer signs them in the late arrivals book.
- Punctuality is analysed alongside attendance.

4. Long Term Absence

- When the total length of absence from school is expected to exceed 4 weeks the Headteacher will refer to the Local Education Authority to seek support from the appropriate service.
- If the child is able to work at home then the school will ensure that work is sent home for the child to complete.

5. Family Illness and Bereavement

- The school has concern and sympathy for the family at such a time and will use its discretion to authorise an agreed period of absence.

6. Communicating Information

- Through newsletters and specific letters the Headteacher is responsible for informing parents of the school's policy and procedures on attendance.

- The Class Teacher will communicate with parents when a child's absence during a term is causing a concern. If absence does not improve then this will then be followed up by the Headteacher if appropriate.
- The school's staged approach for following up low attendance is as follows:
92% attendance – Class teacher will hold a conversation with the child's parents.
90% Letter from Headteacher followed by a minuted meeting to agree an action plan to increase attendance.
The Governor with responsibility for attendance will support.

7. Monitoring of Absences

- Absences are monitored at least termly by the Headteacher, the Attendance Coordinator and the Governor with responsibility for attendance and are reported each term to the Governing Body.
- Attendance data of children whose attendance is below 90% at a given point is also scrutinised by Senior Leaders and Class teachers during half termly Pupil Progress meetings.
- When concerns are identified they will be followed up following Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service guidance. The initial trigger for intervention will be when a child's attendance falls below 90% over a term's period.

8. Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. ie the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Section 8 taken from guidance from Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service (ACE)

9. Children Missing Education

Who are Children Missing Education?

Children of compulsory school age who are:

- Not on a school roll (not including children who are going through the school admissions process)
- Not being educated in an alternative provision
- Not being educated at home

Why do children go missing from education?

The most common reasons are:

- They don't start school when they reach school age
- They don't transfer to secondary school when they should
- The family moves house regularly or becomes homeless
- The family have experienced domestic violence and especially if this means time spent in refuges
- Family breakdown or domestic difficulties
- Parents 'withdraw' children from school due to dispute or disagreement
- No school places are available when a family moves to a new area
- Parents decide to home educate unofficially i.e. without the local authority knowing

Warwickshire has a Children Missing Education Officer who works with schools, agencies and the public to identify and support children who are missing or at risk of missing education

Why it is important

We are concerned about any child or young person who may be missing education, as it might not be just their educational development at risk but also their safety and wellbeing.

How you can help

If you know or suspect a child is missing from education, please let us know straight away.

Schools have an approved process to follow for a child missing. If you are a member of the public or work for another organisation, you can contact the Children Missing Education Officer by phone, letter or email (details at the bottom of this page) and you can remain anonymous if you wish. By notifying us of your concerns you are helping to ensure that safety and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable children in our community and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

What happens next?

Checks are always carried out before contacting parents or carers, so it is always better to advise the Children Missing Education Officer if you are in any doubt.

If the family needs support to help the child back into school we can provide this. Other agencies such as health, police and housing will be contacted if a child cannot be located.

There is a national network of Children Missing Education colleagues across the UK who work together to make sure children receive the right support wherever they move to.

CME Officer details are:

- Carol Hattee
- Telephone 01926 742036 or email carolhattee@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS

Contact for Children Missing Education (Carol Hattee, CME Officer, Tel 01926 742036 or email carolhattee@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

The following are the DfES legal requirements for schools in Warwickshire for the recording and reporting children who leave school without any known destination.

1. Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence ('N' Codes), and 'all reasonable steps' have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school should make an immediate referral to the Children Missing Education Service (CME).
2. 'Reasonable steps' by the school include:
 - a. Telephone calls to all known contacts
 - b. Letters home (including recorded delivery)
 - c. Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
 - d. Possible home visits where safe to do so
 - e. Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc through school contacts
 - f. Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family
 - g. All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's file
3. Referrals to the CME Service should include a fully completed referral form, a copy of the Registration Certificate and details of all letters sent and enquiries made with outcomes.
4. The CME Service will then continue to attempt to locate the child, for at least a further 10 school days, using access to additional contacts/services, e.g. housing. If this fails to establish the pupil's whereabouts the school will be informed by email and may then, but not before, remove the pupil from roll and place the CTF on the School to School database, entering XXXXXXXX in the box for destination. This places the pupil on the list of Children Missing from Education.
5. Deletions from roll agreed with the CME Service will normally be backdated to the 1st day of absence
6. If the CME Service manages to contact pupil and parents, arrangements will be made with the school and family for a return to education, including a re-integration programme where necessary. If the pupil has registered at another school, the school will be asked to delete from roll and transfer the CTF in the normal way to the new school.
7. Pupils leaving school for known destinations outside the maintained sector in England and Wales should be updated to the School to School database using MMMMMMMM in the destination box. This includes private/independent schools, schools in other countries (including Scotland and Northern Ireland) and pupils moving into Home Education.

For Home Education cases they should be formally notified to the Home Education Administrator katenelson@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk by the school, as soon as written confirmation is received from the parent(s). If no confirmation is received the above Missing Children procedures apply.

Note: The attached word document, which would be sent to you electronically, is the form that should be used for reporting a child as missing. This should be filled in with as much information as possible and returned via secure email to the CME Officer carolhattee@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk

