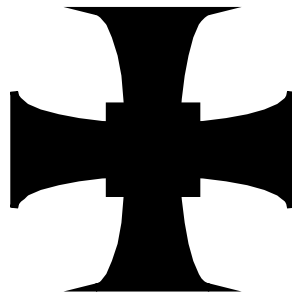


# TRINITY SCHOOL



A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Pastoral Committee**

**Reviewed:** May 2017

**Approved by the Pastoral Committee:** June 2017

**Ratified by the full Governing Body:** July 2017

**Next review:** June 2019

As a school, we seek to promote the highest levels of attendance possible, in partnership with parents and carers and other agencies as appropriate. We believe that excellent school attendance is the foundation for educational success, and Government research establishes a strong link between high attendance and academic attainment.

### **Aims of the Attendance Policy**

- To promote and maintain high levels of attendance for all students, so that they benefit fully from the educational opportunities available to them.
- To raise the awareness of students, parents and carers to the importance of high levels of attendance and punctuality in school, for their further education and future employment.
- To ensure that the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence is clearly understood.

### **Responsibilities, Processes and Procedures**

#### **Students**

All students should strive to achieve 100% attendance.

- Students are expected to be in their period one classrooms by 8.30am to be registered by their subject teacher, and at the afternoon Tutor period by 11.55/12.45 depending upon the lunchtime arrangements in any given period. These two registrations will contribute to am/pm attendance marks.
- Students who arrive in school in the morning after 8.50am should report to Reception before going to their lesson.
- Students who arrive after 1.05pm in the afternoon should proceed directly to their lesson, where they will be registered as late.
- Students should bring a note signed by their parents or carers to explain reasons for being late to or absent from registration.
- Any student leaving the school site should always have an 'exeat' and must show this at the school reception before signing out and leaving the building. Students should then sign in on their return, at times other than the beginning and end of the school day.

*The school operates a policy of detaining students during morning break (DetX), who arrive late at the beginning of the school day without good reason. Students who are persistently late to lessons will also be subject to such sanction.*

The responsibilities of students in the Sixth Form are laid down in a separate document, 'Requirements for Success'.

#### **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers have a number of key responsibilities for ensuring the attendance of their children at school:

##### *Ensuring regular attendance*

- Legally, parents or carers of students are held primarily responsible for the attendance of their children.
- If a child does not attend regularly, parents should work closely with the school and any other agencies engaged by the School to resolve the problem.

- Parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a number of legal actions, as directed by the Local Authority, including: parenting orders, education supervision orders, school attendance orders, fixed penalty notices or prosecution in more serious cases. It is worthy of note that parents/carers can be given one or more of these orders, but the Local Authority does not have to do this before prosecuting.

### *Reporting a student's absence*

Parents and carers are asked to phone the school to report their child's absence by 9.00am on the first day of absence and to provide their son or daughter's Form Tutor with a signed note, explaining the absence, on returning to school. This could be a brief note in the student planner. It is advised that health appointments should be organised for the beginning or end of school days, thus minimising disruption to learning to no more than half a day.

### *Holidays in term time*

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances". This also applies to family holidays. Under the new legislation the following absence requests are examples of those that will not meet the criteria for approval:

- Family holidays due to convenience
- Visiting relatives
- Family Day Trips (to exhibitions, concerts etc.)
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays
- Birthdays
- Minding the house
- Resting after a late night

The decision about what constitutes an exceptional circumstance is up to the School's Co-Headteachers, but would include, for example, bereavement of a close family member and legal matters. It most definitely will not be given for family holidays, and parents may be fined for taking their children on holiday during term time.

Parents/carers who wish to secure permission from the Co-Headteachers to remove a child from school during term time must make an application in advance (as a parent/carer the child normally lives with). This written application must clearly state that there are exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence application form can be obtained from school reception or the school website, to support the application process.

It is up to the Co Headteachers how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted. Holidays taken by students during term time without the school's permission will be recorded on the student's attendance record as unauthorised absence, and may be subject to a 'Fixed Penalty Notice'.

### ***The Local Authority***

As a school we are obliged to ensure students meet the attendance targets set by the Local Authority and we will take measures including legal ones to ensure that our obligations to the Local Authority are met.

## ***The Governing Body***

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that there is a whole-school policy on attendance and lateness, and that this policy is made known to parents/carers. They also receive regular reporting from the senior leadership of the school on the monitoring of attendance rates and their comparison with national averages, and hold them to account on the construction, implementation and revision of the attendance policy.

## ***Co-Headteachers***

- The Co-Headteachers encourage a good working relationship with parents and carers by publicising the arrangements for notifying absence and the school's policy towards authorised absence in the home-school agreement.
- The Co-Headteachers ensure that the attendance policy is known and understood by all members of the school community.
- The Co-Headteachers ensure that a clear policy on attendance is in place, which is known to and understood by staff, students, parents, and carers.

## ***Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Welfare)***

- The Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Welfare) is responsible for formulating and updating the school's attendance policy as and when necessary.
- The Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Welfare) liaises with the Pastoral Administration Manager, School Attendance Officer, Heads of House and the Local Authority to ensure that all attendance issues are being addressed, in accordance with the school's stated policy.
- The Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Welfare) is responsible for reporting to the Co-Headteachers, the Governing Body, the LA and the DfE all matters relating to attendance in the 11-16 school.

## ***The School Attendance Officer***

The school employs an Attendance Officer, whose duties are:

- To help ensure that all students in the school meet their attendance targets.
- To liaise with students, parents and carers where attendance is a concern, to agree improvement targets and monitor progress towards these.
- At the request of Heads of House, to make home visits to investigate absence in situations where school has not been provided with reasons for prolonged or frequent absence.
- To work with the Houses and other areas of the school to put in place adapted timetables to support a successful return to school after prolonged absence or poor attendance.
- To work with other agencies including the Police and the Local Authority Inclusion Officer as required to investigate absences.
- To agree and monitor Attendance Action Plans with parents and carers.
- To attend Attendance Review Conferences with the Local Authority Attendance Officer and monitor progress against the actions agreed at these meetings, and to recommend further actions including legal proceedings in cases where the agreed actions are not met within the timescale agreed.
- To co-ordinate with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer, who will assess the parents/carers of students who have failed to make sufficient improvement in their attendance and therefore proceed with legal action as appropriate. This is in accordance with Section 444 (1) or Section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996, under

which parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school may face a fine or imprisonment.

### ***Inclusion Officers***

- The school works closely with the assigned Local Authority Inclusion Officer to implement measures to improve school attendance.
- The Local Authority Inclusion Officer meets with the School Attendance Officer on a regular basis. The purpose of these meetings are to explore the true reasons for absence of students whose attendance is substantially below their targets, and to agree actions aimed at improving the attendance of these students. This will normally involve setting attendance targets to be met by student with the support of his/her family.
- The Inclusion Officer will chair Attendance Review Conferences (ARC). At these meetings actions will be agreed with parents/carers to improve the attendance of their son or daughter. Failure to meet these targets within a defined timescale can lead to instigation of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- The Inclusion Officer supports the re-integration of students with poor attendance, by liaising with the school to arrange appropriate support and timetables for genuine school refusers in order to reintegrate them into the school successfully after a prolonged absence.
- The Inclusion Officer recommends prosecution of the parents/carers of students with poor attendance, who have not met the attendance targets set.

### ***Registration***

Students are registered electronically and their individual electronic attendance records updated daily. Reports produced from the registration system are used as the basis of intervention with students whose unauthorised attendance is a cause for concern. The same information is used to reward students for excellent attendance through the school's reporting system and by sending letters home termly for students who have achieved 100% attendance during that term.

### ***The Houses and Form Tutors***

- Reward programmes are in place for Students with excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Form Tutors comment positively on students with a good record of attendance in reports and in the references they write for employers, universities and colleges.
- Heads of House discuss the information about students whose attendance is causing concern to the School Attendance Officer for investigation.
- Using the relevant attendance data, Heads of House, in liaison with the School Attendance Officer, keep the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Welfare) updated about students with poor attendance, the form of intervention being implemented and keep a record of outcomes.
- Heads of House are responsible for arranging sanctions for students who truant lessons, according to school discipline procedures and reflective of individual cases.
- When students have reduced timetables to accommodate alternative provision, Heads of House should inform the Attendance Officer of expected attendance during school hours. Attendance at assigned alternative provision centres are monitored also, to ensure that provision is effectively engaging participants.

### ***House Tutors***

Wherever possible, the House Tutors will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence to report absences and to ascertain reasons for absences and support the Head of House with their duties as described above.

In addition, they will liaise with the Attendance Officer to request home visits, when appropriate, where it has not proved possible to make contact by phone.

### ***Subject Teachers***

- Subject teachers take an electronic register at the start of each lesson and keep records of lesson attendance.
- Subject teachers write in a student's planner any permission to leave the classroom during a lesson, for example to go to the school medical room or to the toilet.
- They will apply the relevant sanction and relay the names of students who are persistently late to lessons to pastoral staff. This will be logged on the registration system.
- They will complete any returns required for students in an attendance target group.