



Turves Green Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Rights Respecting Link: A3: *The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.*

A28: *Every child has the right to an education. The government must take measures to encourage regular attendance at school.*

Our aim at Turves Green Primary School is to provide the greatest opportunity for children's learning. We endeavor to provide all our pupils with an equal chance to make the most of the education that school offers, by providing a positive and encouraging atmosphere. For this to be achieved, it is vital that every child attends school regularly and punctually.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. However, the school recognizes that problems may occasionally occur which affect this. Through working in partnership with parents, we can find solutions to problems together and ensure children's right to a full education.

Aims

At Turves Green Primary School we aim to:

- Develop supportive strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Raise pupil, parent and staff awareness of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality;
- Use attendance data to identify/address any trends of individuals or groups;
- Reduce unauthorised absence/leave of absence within a legal framework (Fast Track and Penalty Notices);
- Reward regular/improved attendance and punctuality;
- Take steps to provide learning for pupils unable to attend school due to serious health issues (and support their return to school).

Procedures for dealing with absences

1. On the first day of absence, parents/carers are expected to call the office and provide a reason for absence. If no contact is made by 10am a phone call will be made to parent/carer by office staff and the reason will be recorded. Pastoral Manager will make calls to vulnerable children's families or if there is any other concern.
2. Any concerns will then be discussed by Designated Safeguarding Leads in school to decide any further actions to be taken for example a safe and well check.
3. If absence continues with no reason, after three school days an absence pro-forma letter will be sent home. This must be completed by parents/carers and returned to school.
4. If a teacher/member of office staff is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of persistent absence, the child's name and details are referred (in writing) to the Pastoral Manager who will pursue the matter.
5. Pupils with a record of persistent absence (below 90%) will be contacted by the Pastoral Manager. If pupils are persistently absent for medical reasons, then medical evidence is requested for any further absence. Failure to produce medical evidence will result in an unauthorised absence.

Personalised Pupil Progress Tracking Sheets

Poor attendance or persistent absence is likely be a significant barrier to learning and attainment. During pupil progress meetings, attendance issues that are impacting on progress are discussed and recorded. These concerns are communicated to the Pastoral Manager.

What do we define as being late?

If a child arrives at school after 08:50 (when the entrance doors close) the child is considered late and will be given a late mark 'L'. The time registers are 'closed' officially is 9.30am. If a child arrives after this time, they will be given a 'U' mark (late after the register closes) which counts as an absence for the whole session.

Procedures for dealing with lateness

1. School doors are closed at 8.50am after this time children are classed as arriving 'late' and must report to the office, where names are recorded and the appropriate code added to the class electronic register on SIMS. Children are expected to 'make-up' lost learning through lateness.
2. A letter is sent to parents of children who have arrived late three times. These parents then attend a meeting with Pastoral Manager if there are further sessions of lateness. See Appendix 2.
3. The Pastoral Manager monitors punctuality on a regular basis. The impact of letters/meetings is evaluated over time.
4. Persistent lateness will be dealt with by the Pastoral Manager and the Head of School.

Medical Appointments

Parents are actively discouraged from arranging routine medical appointments during the school day as a dentist and GPs' surgeries are open outside of school hours. Parents need to inform the office in advance of any medical appointments and show the appointment letter/card. If children arrive late during the morning due to a medical appointment, the register code 'U' will be used to show they are in school and a note added to their record showing the reason. Should a child miss a whole session due to a medical appointment, this will be recorded as 'M'. An 'M' code however may only be used for one session in a day. Medical evidence will be requested.

Registration

Registration takes place at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is completed using the electronic SIMS system and is the class teacher's responsibility.

An 'N' is used for absence and the office updates following first day phone calls.

If a class are on a day trip, the register must be completed for both the morning and afternoon sessions. The afternoon session should not however be completed for those children that are not going on the trip (a list of all children on trips is left with the office by class teachers).

Please note that registers must be completed accurately because they constitute a legal document and form part of a chain of evidence. They will also be needed for safety reasons such as in the event of a fire.

A class teacher concerned about the accuracy of their register should contact the office for advice.

On a Friday afternoon the Pastoral Manager records the class attendance figures. This is used for the awarding of the weekly KS1 and KS2 attendance certificates and puppies and to update the class attendance display.

Class teachers receive an attendance print out from the office manager on a Friday afternoon showing the attendance for their class for that week. This information is used to give attendance stickers to children with attendance over 97%.

Termly star badges are awarded to children with attendance of 97% or above. Reward afternoons are held for classes with the most gold level attendance achieved.

Raising Attendance Concerns

Any concerns should be raised in writing/e-mail with the Pastoral Manager or as part of the half termly meeting.

The Attendance File

This is kept by the Pastoral Manager and contains information on whole school, class and individual pupils along with analyses of trends over time and across the school. Also records are kept of the outcomes of meetings with parents.

Role of the DLP/Pastoral Manager

Children are required to attend school 190 days every year. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/person/people with parental responsibility to ensure they do Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored and when it is appropriate for school to take action this will be undertaken and feedback given to class teachers. The legal process of Fast Track will be applied to those. Turves Green Primary School participates in the 'Fast Track' campaign in collaboration with the Local Authority to address poor attendance. Persistent unauthorised absence is not tolerated. As part of Fast Track parents may be issued with penalty notices and could be requested to appear in court. The Pastoral Manager is responsible for gathering evidence/communication with parents who are part of this campaign and regarding any court proceedings.

Leave of Absence (no longer referred to as ‘family holiday’ or ‘extended leave’)

The Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2013 and the Education (Penalty Notices – England) Regulations 2013 are now in force and followed by this school. The law clearly states that parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and that head teachers can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced.

Taking unauthorised leave in term time is therefore grounds for issuing a penalty notice (£60-£120 per parent, per child e.g.: two children taking a one week leave of absence to visit family abroad would result in a fine of £240 for the parents, rising to £480 if not paid promptly).

All parents are informed of this when children join the school, a whole school letter is sent out at the beginning of the school year and details appear on the school website. This is in line with the policies in all other local schools.

Parents requesting leave during term time are referred to the Pastoral Manager who will explain the procedures in person and the request in writing is then passed to the Head of School. The outcome of the request will clearly state if the leave is authorised or unauthorised and the consequences, this will be posted to the parents.

Turves Green Primary School does not authorise leave in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If the pupil is female and from a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practicing or affected community, then the Head of School or Designated Safeguarding Lead will use direct questioning to ascertain whether “cutting” of the girl will be undertaken during this holiday. The Head of School will then take the information from this meeting and make a decision on whether to refer to local CYPS or Police.

Parents are also warned that penalty notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification.

Rewards and Incentives

- Certificates and puppets are presented in weekly assemblies to the best Foundation, KS1 and KS2 classes.
- A display inside the hall and in the reception area show the whole school attendance figure for that week and the class winners for attendance across school.
- 97% and above attendance certificates/badges are awarded for termly and whole school year attendance. 100% attendance prizes are awarded at the end of the school year. Both happen in special attendance assemblies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The systems and policy are monitored and reviewed at least annually. The attendance and punctuality data is analysed by the Pastoral Manager weekly.

Findings, patterns and trends are presented on a regular basis (at least termly) to Governors, parents, senior leadership team, teachers and children. Factors are recorded that may affect overall school attendance i.e. extended absences, religious festivals, pupil mobility etc.

Pupil records are transferred and received in line with legal requirements.

Policy written by:

Lyn Belcher Pastoral Manager

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate

Notes:

The term 'parent' refers to:

- Any natural parent to the child/children whether married or not
- Anyone who has parental responsibility for that child/children
- Anyone who cares for/has responsibility for looking after that child/children