Attendance Policy

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This policy applies to all The Complete Education Solution (TCES) schools and services

Contents

Introduction

For many of the pupils in TCES Group schools, one of their most significant achievements, and an indicator of their good progress, is their improved attendance at school. Many of the pupils have a history of interrupted education or non-attendance at school. By offering high quality educational provision, most of our pupils respond positively and attend regularly. It is important that we are able to celebrate this achievement by having accurate records of their attendance and also to be in a position to set targets which will help to improve their attendance record even further. Sometimes we are less successful and a review of attendance patterns can indicate the pupils who are having problems.

Aims of the Policy

We recognise that:

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school every school day.
- That they will arrive on time (except for when there is a delay by the taxi) and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from Parents/Carers:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend. Parents should contact the school if the child is not attending by 8.30am.

- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

Parents/Carers and pupils can expect the following from school:
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody other than the school leadership team and the pupil's teacher without the consent of the pupil or their parent).
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education

Liaison with Local Authorities
- We will supply a termly report to each Authority on the pupils placed by them at the school
- We will discuss with nominated representatives from the Authority any issues of concern over attendance.
- We will liaise with the Authority's EWS where there is persistent non-attendance or significant concerns over attendance.
- We expect Authorities to support any initiatives we undertake to improve a pupil's attendance which may include letters, attendance at meetings, and transport support for parents or pupils to attend, use of EWS to enforce regulations.

Pupil attendance and registers
It is a statutory and a contractual obligation for our schools to record, track and improve pupil attendance. We do this by completing the twice daily school registers on Scholar Pack, which is then followed up by in depth analysis at the weekly SLT meetings, as well as at Central Services. Declining attendance must always be taken extremely seriously, as it can and may signal a much larger concern with a pupil.

Week Commencing	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
02/09/2013	# #	# #	/ \	/ \	/ Y
09/09/2013	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ Y
16/09/2013	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ Y
23/09/2013	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ \	/ Y

The school registers must be completed by the school administrators twice daily – in the morning by 9.30am, and in the afternoon by 1.30pm. This is non-negotiable and must be adhered to. It is unacceptable for any pupil register to have gaps showing.

Attendance Codes

The attendance codes used on ScholarPack are the same attendance codes used in every UK school. TCES Group do not differ from the national expectation. The codes are split into different categories and the registers must be completed accurately every day.

Register Code	Description	DfE guidance on when to use this code
/	Present AM	Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.
\	Present PM	Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration. Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed
L	Late (before registers closed) (L)	Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (C)	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
E	Excluded (E)	If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
H	Holiday agreed (H)	Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
I	Illness NOT appointments (I)	Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.
M	Appointments (M)	Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is

Register Code	Description	DfE guidance on when to use this code
		counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
R	Religious observance (R)	Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
S	Study leave (S)	Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence (T)	This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.
X	For Early Years (X)	This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
B	Off-site Ed. not dual (B)	This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. **This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work**. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
D	Dual registration (D)	This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and

Register Code	Description	DfE guidance on when to use this code
		absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.
J	Interview (J)	This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.
P	Sports (P)	This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Visit or trip (V)	This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
W	Work experience (W)	Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.
G	Holiday NOT agreed (G)	If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
N	No reason (N)	Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).
O	Unauthorised absence (O)	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (after registers) (U)	Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.
Y	Absent due to exceptional circumstances (Y)	This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because: • The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or • The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or • A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend

Register Code	Description	DfE guidance on when to use this code
		because: • The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity). This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.
#	School Closed to all Pupils (#)	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.
Z	Pupil not on roll	This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Colour	Description
	Present
	Authorised Absence
	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
	Unauthorised Absence
	Not Counted In Attendance Calculations

All attendance data for a school MUST be reported termly to the Local Authorities as part of the Local Authority Quality Assurance report.

DfE guidance - School Year

Schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils. If a school is prevented from meeting for one or more sessions because of an unavoidable event, it should find a practical way of holding extra sessions. If it cannot find a practical way of doing this then it is not required to make up the lost sessions.

If schools want to reduce the number of days they have to meet, they can make an application to the Secretary of State asking for a temporary exemption from the requirements of the legislation using the power to innovate.

DfE Guidance - School Day

Every school day must have two sessions divided by a break. The length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body. The governing body has the power to

revise the length of the school day as it sees fit. There is no requirement to consult parents on revisions to the school day but it can assist parents to do so.

DfE Guidance - Part-Time timetables

Can a school place a pupil on a part-time timetable?

As a rule, no. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Within TCES Group schools and services, any pupil on a part-time timetable for any length of time, must have WRITTEN agreements for this from the local authority SEN department. The Business development team at Central Services must also be made aware, so that they can effectively track the placement's success.

Attendance Toolkit

The TCES Group Attendance Toolkit is designed to assist administrators, staff and the SLT to follow a set procedure in tackling pupil absence. It clearly defines the timescales we adhere to, and the relevant action that must be taken at each stage.

The key to the success of the Attendance Toolkit is communication, both with the parent/carer, and the Local Authority. We must prove we are doing everything we can to assist a young person in returning to school, following or during any period of prolonged absence.

There are multiple templates of letters to be sent to parents/carers at each stage of a pupil's absence. These must always be sent within the defined timescales, and recorded on the pupil's Scholar Pack record.

Phone calls home are also a vital part of the Attendance Toolkit, and must happen at all stages. However, these phone calls must then also be recorded on the pupil's Scholar Pack record, as evidence that we have at the least, attempted communication.

By following the Attendance Toolkit rigorously, schools can prove that they are meeting their statutory and contractual obligations regarding attendance, ultimately resulting in a referral to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) if all internal attempts to re-engage a pupil in education fail.
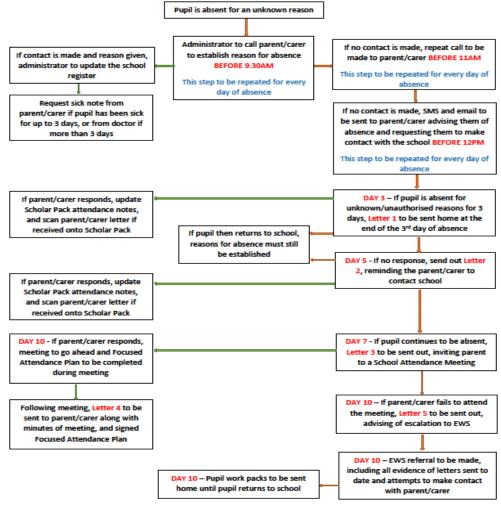
Practical

TCES Attendance Toolkit - Flowchart for administration process

Pupil is absent for an unknown reason

Administrator to call parent/carer to establish reason for absence **BEFORE 9.30AM**

This step to be repeated for every day of absence

If contact is made and reason given, administrator to update the school register

Request sick note from parent/carer if pupil has been sick for up to 3 days, or from doctor if more than 3 days

If no contact is made, repeat call to be made to parent/carer **BEFORE 11AM**

This step to be repeated for every day of absence

If no contact is made, SMS and email to be sent to parent/carer advising them of absence and requesting them to make contact with the school **BEFORE 12PM**

This step to be repeated for every day of absence

DAY 3 – If pupil is absent for unknown/unauthorised reasons for 3 days, **Letter 1** to be sent home at the end of the 3rd day of absence

If parent/carer responds, update Scholar Pack attendance notes, and scan parent/carer letter if received onto Scholar Pack

If pupil then returns to school, reasons for absence must still be established

DAY 5 - If no response, send out **Letter 2**, reminding the parent/carer to contact school

If parent/carer responds, update Scholar Pack attendance notes, and scan parent/carer letter if received onto Scholar Pack

DAY 7 - If pupil continues to be absent, **Letter 3** to be sent out, inviting parent to a School Attendance Meeting

DAY 10 - If parent/carer responds, meeting to go ahead and Focused Attendance Plan to be completed during meeting

DAY 10 – If parent/carer fails to attend the meeting, **Letter 5** to be sent out, advising of escalation to EWS

Following meeting, **Letter 4** to be sent to parent/carer along with minutes of meeting, and signed Focused Attendance Plan

DAY 10 – EWS referral to be made, including all evidence of letters sent to date and attempts to make contact with parent/carer

DAY 10 – Pupil work packs to be sent home until pupil returns to school

ADMINISTRATORS ARE TO ENSURE THAT SCHOLAR PACK ATTENDANCE NOTES ARE UPDATED AT EVERY STAGE OF THE PROCESS, WITH INITIALS, DATES AND TIME OF PHONE CALLS. ALL LETTERS SENT MUST BE SIGNED BY THE HEAD TEACHER AND THE SIGNED COPY SCANNED ONTO SCHOLAR PACK

Guidelines

- Registration is from 8.45am – 9.30am. This is when registers are open. Teachers should complete their class registers on scholar Pack by 9.30am.
- If pupils arrive after registration has closed at 9.30am, then the school should use its discretion in respect of late taxis as to whether to mark them absent for the morning session.
- If parents/carers have not called by 9.30am, then the attendance toolkit process must be started.
- Regarding emergency meetings with parents/carers about inappropriate behaviour of specific pupils, the school should contact the parent/carer, agree that transport will be cancelled for the following morning and agree on a time for a meeting early in the morning. If the parent/carer is unable to come in prior to registration, agree a time that is convenient to the parent/carer. In this case transport should not be cancelled for the morning.

- The school needs to have strategies in place to improve attendance if attendance in the previous year has been below National Standards.
- The school needs to consider a rewards structure for attendance e.g. attendance vouchers in weekly celebration assemblies
- Target setting should be agreed with pupils.
- Serious attendance issues will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer in writing and meetings will be arranged to discuss individual pupil attendance and related attendance targets.

Encouraging attendance through target setting, good practice and rewards

Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:
- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- Recording of good attendance on individual success reports and end of term reports
- Awarding certificates and vouchers for 100% attendance each week.
- An 'improved attendance' certificate for any pupil achieving a greater than 10% improvement in attendance in any on half-term/term.
- A trophy to be presented to the class with the most improved attendance each month/half term and awards for any group with 100% attendance in any month/half term.
- All awards to be awarded by the Head Teacher and/or school Proprietor as appropriate
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.
- Setting reasonable targets for pupils, which are incorporated into their IEBPs.
- Sending parents termly absence reports, together with targets for improvement as appropriate
- The efficient use of computerised registration systems can provide valuable, year group, class and pupil level attendance data which enables speedy analysis and timely responses by the school.

Exclusions

TCES have NEVER permanently excluded a pupil and have had ZERO fixed term exclusions since 2018.

At TCES Group it is our intention to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to work in a safe and secure environment enabling all teachers to teach and all students to learn. The Behaviour Policy is underpinned by the above statement.

Pupils whose behaviour is causing concern are the pupils who regularly fail to respond to the expectations set out in the Behaviour Policy. Staff members need to be aware that the policy is there to support all pupils and to act as a deterrent to all pupils who regularly breach reasonable expected standards.

Whilst every step will be taken to keep children in school, on extremely rare occasions their behaviour will be serious enough to require a fixed term exclusion (FTE). When this is deemed to be the appropriate sanction, the following steps must be taken:

1. SLT are to collectively review the incident including all pre-incident behaviour and staff behaviour/actions
2. If it is felt that the pupil's behaviour warrants an FTE of any length, the SLT must immediately contact the Schools' Proprietor and/or the Director of Integrated Services to discuss the incident and the requested sanction
3. The Schools' Proprietor and/or the Director of Integrated Services will have the final decision in whether or not a sanction of FTE can be imposed.
4. If agreed, the length of the FTE will be agreed with all parties.
5. The SLT must immediately contact the parent/carer of the pupil to explain the FTE and the next steps, including a reintegration meeting between a member of the SLT, parent/carer and pupil upon the pupil's return to school.
6. Academic work must be provided for any time the pupil is out of school on an FTE.
7. During the reintegration meeting, reflection exercises must be completed and if necessary, behaviour contracts signed by all parties.