



**THE COMPLETE  
EDUCATION SOLUTION**

CREATING UNIQUE JOURNEYS FOR LIFE AND LEARNING

# Attendance Policy

Approved by TCES Operational Board on behalf of

Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor

**Date of next formal review, July 2024**

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

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## Introduction

At the TCES Group we support young people with neurodiverse needs on a journey from isolation to independence. We understand that some of our pupils arrive with us with a history of low attendance, bringing with them traumatic experiences of school. We believe that low attendance is a form of communication and requires a multi-disciplinary approach from education, clinical, pastoral, and safeguarding teams. We expect all professionals to take responsibility for our pupil's journey to accessing full time education and apply our core value of 'High Expectations'.

It is vital for our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education, achieved by supporting them in attending school regularly and punctually. We believe that for our attendance vision to be effective it must be consistently applied throughout the whole school, by its staff, pupils', families, and carers whilst we embody our 'Never Give Up' approach for our pupils.

## 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 out of their control e.g. due to 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.
- 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.
- Incentives to continue to improve 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 Inclusion Committee and 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 Beginning	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
31/08/2020	##	##	BB	BB
07/09/2020	/\	/\	/\	/\
14/09/2020	/\	/\	/\	/\
21/09/2020	/\	/\	/\	/\
28/09/2020	/\	/\	/\	/\
05/10/2020	/\	/\	/\	/\

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
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
I01	Authorised absence due to illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)
I02	Authorised absence due to illness: confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
J	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an interview
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as

	pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in school
X01	Non-compulsary school age absence - not counted in possible attendances
X02	Pupil self-isolating with Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
X03 (2020-21 academic year)	Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) INSIDE school setting
X04 (2020-21 academic year)	Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) OUTSIDE school setting
X05	Pupils required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory)
X06	Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their Doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend
X07	Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in Government advice
X08 (2021-22 academic year)	Not attending in response to outbreak management
X09 (2021-22 academic year)	Self-isolating: close contact required to isolate by NHS Test and Trace
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances

#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
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Colour	Description
	Present
	Authorised Absence
	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
	Unauthorised Absence
	Not Counted In Attendance Calculations

## 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.

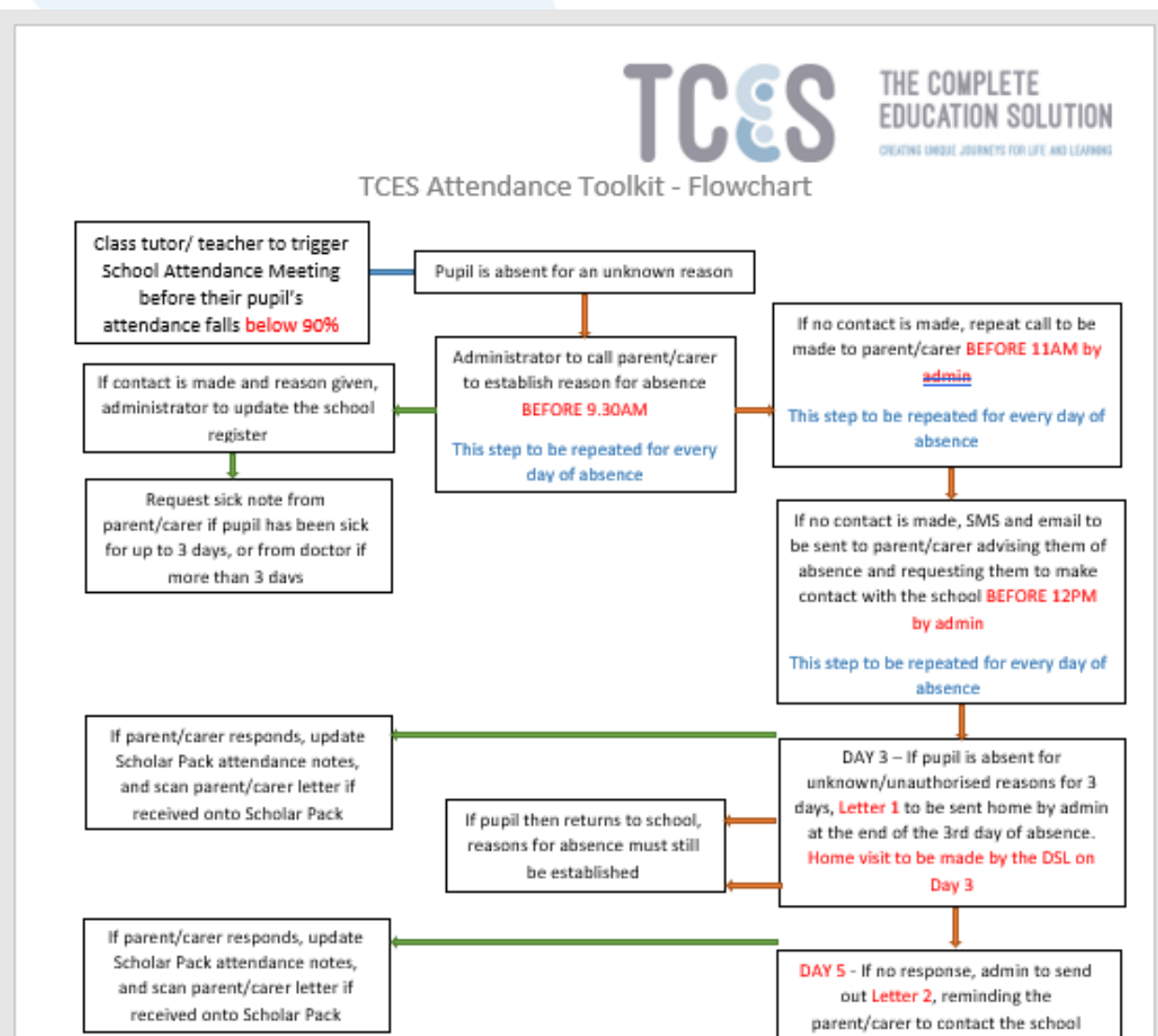
The key to the success of the Attendance Toolkit is communication, both with the parent/carer, and the Local Authority. We must prove we are doing everything we can to assist a young person in returning to school, following or during any period of prolonged absence.

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.

## Attendance Toolkit Flowchart





## Practical 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 for 100% and significant improvement of attendance each week.
- An 'improved attendance' certificate for any pupil achieving a greater than 10% improvement in attendance in any on half-term/term.
- Vouchers for pupils who achieve 100% attendance each half 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/SLT 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 Pathway plans.
- 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

At TCES Group we do not issue Fixed Term Exclusions. 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 identified by the Inclusion Committee and targeted and intensive interventions begin, taken from our the Behaviour Toolkit in line with our Therapeutic Principles.