



# Attendance Policy

**At Trefonen RESPECT is our core value. Mutual respect and good behaviour is the expectation of all adults and children at all times.**

***We seek to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education, maximising the opportunities for all to realise their true potential. All school staff will work, with pupils and their families, to support them in meeting their legal duty to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance; and that any problems which may impede full attendance are acted upon quickly.***

Staff and Governors expect full and punctual attendance from all pupils.

## **Principles**

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always requested.

Staff and Governors believe that:

- There is a link between regular attendance and academic achievement.
- Regular attendance encourages students to benefit from the whole range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities on offer.
- Full attendance is a duty, and a crucial factor in determining personal responsibility and a good work ethic.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason (i.e. illness or other unavoidable cause).

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy, absences which have not been properly explained and children who arrive at school too late to receive a mark in the register.

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, parents and pupil. If a pupil is reluctant to attend, outside agencies may also be involved, including the Education Welfare Officer. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage to enable us to resolve problems together. If all ways of trying to improve the pupil's attendance have failed, the EWO can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order.

## **Procedures**

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Illness and Other Legitimate Reasons.

If a pupil is unfit for school, parents are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 10.00am. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on a case-by-case basis; notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing a valid reason for absence. It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for

shopping, looking after younger children, day trips, hairdresser's appointments etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which take place during school time.

*When the pupil returns, he or she must bring a written note, signed by the parent for each period of absence. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a pupil's illness, such as a doctor's note, may be requested.*

- Absence without explanation.

If a pupil is absent at morning registration, and the school has not received an explanation by 10.00am, the School will contact the parent using the automated 'ParentMail' system by text, telephone, or email. In cases where illness persists beyond one day the school will contact the parent again to re-confirm the absence unless a definite return date has previously been given.

- Holidays

**This school is pro-active in discouraging parents from taking pupils out of school for holidays during term time. We consider this action inappropriate and harmful to the education of the pupils.**

All holiday leave in term time is at the discretion of the Headteacher who will personally consider each request. However, only in very exceptional circumstances will holiday be authorised. Requests for holidays which have not been authorised will be recorded as "Unauthorised Holiday". This will then be followed up by the Education Welfare Officer, who could issue a penalty notice or fine. Pupils who take a holiday in term time will be expected to complete extra work to ensure they do not fall behind.

- Lateness

Pupils must attend on time to be given a mark for that session unless the lateness is unavoidable (e.g. late bus or medical appointment). Parents are expected to ensure that pupils are on time for registration.

*Students arriving after 09.00am will be marked as Late. Students arriving after registration has closed at 09.05am will be marked as absent/late for the morning period.*

- Truancy

Truancy from school is treated as a serious issue and will always be communicated to parents. A detention for each period missed may be issued, in these cases the parent will always be contacted.

- Attendance Monitoring

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) monitors attendance, meeting with the school administrator to identify any particular causes for concern. Where a pupil's attendance drops below 87% the EWO will contact the parent. If non attendance continues the Local Authority may prosecute or issue a fixed penalty fine. Parents are required to inform the school of the reasons for their children's absence. Failure to provide a reason for absence will be picked up by the School Administrator who will write requesting the reason for absence.

**Request for Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances**

Headteachers can only authorise any absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

Full name of child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for application and dates \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's forename \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's forename \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The headteacher may take into account:

- It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life.
- It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event.
- The event **cannot** be organised outside of the school term.
- Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school.

Office use only .....

Authorised  Unauthorised

Signed .....(headteacher) Date: .....

**WARNING**

If this requested period of absence has not been authorised, details will be passed to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal Warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence:

- Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time
- The headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway; or
- A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation