



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation	2
3. Roles and Responsibilities	2
4. Recording Attendance	4
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	6
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	7
7. Attendance	7
8. Monitoring arrangements	7
9. Links with other policies	8
Appendix 1: Attendance Codes	9

1. AIMS

TLE Independent School (TLEIS) promotes attendance to ensure learners are safe and as part of ongoing safeguarding. By attending TLEIS children have the opportunity to meet their educational outcomes, have supportive adults in their lives and are able to share any concerns they have with staff who have a genuine interest in their development.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent (less than 90%) and severe absence (less than 50%)
- Ensuring every child has access to the education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure children have the support in place to attend school
- We promote and support punctuality in attending the provision and all lessons set.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the provision
- Monitoring absence data
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

The designated senior leadership team is responsible for attendance

The designated senior leadership team are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the provision
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents alongside any other professionals, to discuss any decline in attendance
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to young people and families
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and regular reporting to other professionals
- Working with the local authority through a multi-disciplinary approach to tackle all absence, including persistent and severe
- Advising the EIO (authorised by the Head of Centre) when to request the consideration of issuing penalty notices from the local authority

The Acting head of centre who is responsible for attendance is **Philippa Nelson** and can be contacted via 07743560251

All staff

All staff are responsible for reporting attendance, to our allocated attendance officer (Carol Fell). Attendance officer will do this by inputting the relevant data in the Dcpro platform and liaising with the registered council. Attendance is recorded daily on arrival. This will be done at the start of the school day

Attendance Leads

Attendance Leads will:

- Record the child's attendance using the appropriate code
- Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record appropriately
- Call the parents/carers of a child if they do not present themselves within 30 mins of the start of the first session. (If the provision has not already received advanced notification from parents/carers of the absence, the provision will make contact with home to ascertain the reason for the absence. Attendance is electronically recorded in the provision.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time and equipped to learn
- Call the school to report their learner's absence before 08:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. For learners who attend a PM session should notify the provision by 11:30am and each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their learners are made outside of the school day.

Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Attend the provision every day on time

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

Attendance register

TLEIS will keep an attendance register and place all learners onto this register.

TLEIS will take an attendance register at the start of the first session (morning) of each school day and once during the second session (afternoon). It will mark whether every learner is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

TLEIS will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not (it is the Centre Manager decision to authorise an absence (not the parent)
- The nature of the activity if a child is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a child is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

T.L.E Independent school will keep every entry on the attendance register for at least 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Learners must arrive in the provision by 09:30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09:30am and will be kept open until 09:45am. The register for the second session will be taken in the afternoon.

Learners arriving at other times of the day may be marked present if this is part of an agreed plan for example at the request of a medical practitioner.

Unplanned absence

The child's parent/carer must notify the provision of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school centre manager (see also section 7)

Parents/carers should report absence to the provision on 07743560251

The provision will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the provision has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the provision may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The provision will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the provision is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the learner's parent/carer notifies the provision in advance of the appointment.

Parents and carers should request leave of absence by calling the centre manager.

However, parents/carers are encouraged and requested to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of education for the minimum amount of time necessary and should attend before and after the appointment.

The learner's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the provision can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A child who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as authorised late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised late, using the appropriate code
- Learners who are identified as being persistently late will have a meeting called with parents to discuss reasons for lateness and how this can be rectified. Persistent lateness may result in the issuing of a penalty notice where parents/carers will be subject to a monetary fine.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any learner who is expected to attend the provision but does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the provision will:

- Call the learner's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the provision cannot reach any of the learner's emergency contacts, the provision will attempt a home visit to safeguard the learner.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the provision will utilise a multi-disciplinary approach and involve local authority partners in order to improve attendance for the learner. The school will complete a home visit/well being check after 3 consecutive absences and keep all other professionals updated.

Reporting to parents/carers

The provision will regularly inform parents about their learner's attendance and absence levels at the review meetings held minimum termly and more often where necessary.

5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Approval for term-time absence

The Head of School will only grant a leave of absence to a learner during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Centre Managers discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent for.

The Provision considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and evidence, and relevant context behind the request. Request for leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday is unlikely to be authorised

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request, the centre manager may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised** absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller children travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Romani people, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the provision, but it is not known whether the child is attending educational provision
- Study Leave
- Part time timetables and transitions – this should be in accordance with the agreed part time timetable and integration policy and only in very exceptional circumstances, time limited and regularly reviewed
- EHCP requirements

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority on behalf of schools/academies and the police

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as unauthorised holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an suspended/excluded child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment remains unpaid after 28 days, the local authority will issue legal proceedings against parents/carers.

6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Staff at TLEIS are committed to promoting and achieving good levels of attendance in accordance with the Provision attendance policy. Underpinning this commitment is a belief that only if learner attend school regularly, can they take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

In addition to this, TLEIS promotes an environment where learner feel safe and valued.

7. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Monitoring attendance

The Provision will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual learner's level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of or individual learner whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Attendance is a standing item on the agenda at Senior Leadership Team meetings and learner or groups of learners who are cause for concern are discussed and a plan is put into action
- Monitoring takes place as part of a whole provision's priority.

Using data to improve attendance

TLEIS will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to all teaching staff, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with children and families at the earliest opportunity
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school.

TLEIS will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings and work alongside parents of learners who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school and ensure children are accessing the education to which they are entitled
- Offer Early Help Support and other attendance support to support better school attendance
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the head of school. At every review, the policy will be approved by the director.

9. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Achievement and Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Child is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Learner is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Learner arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Learner is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Learner is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Learner has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Learner is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Learner is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Learner is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Learner has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Learner has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Learner has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a learner will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Learner is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Learner is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 learner is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Romani, Roma, and traveller absence	Learner from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Learner is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Learner is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for learner's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Learner arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Learner of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or learner is in custody
Z	Learner not on admission register	Register set up but learner has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

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<u>Date approved by Governors</u>		02/09/2027