



Trafalgar Schools' Federation

Believe, Inspire, Achieve

Reviewed by PPC Committee: Autumn 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2025

Attendance and Lateness Policy

Purpose

All schools are required to report levels of absence. Families are encouraged to support their child's education by keeping all absences to a minimum and to ensure they attend regularly and in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school. This policy is intended to ensure we monitor pupil attendance thoroughly to keep absence to a minimum and keep attendance levels high. It is also important to consider the safeguarding implications of children missing from education.

The Educational Welfare Office (EWO) monitors attendance on behalf of the Local Authority (LA). Where a child's attendance is cause for concern parents/carers will be advised and may be asked to attend a meeting to address the problem.

Principles, Procedures and Practice

All absences for medical reasons such as hospital visits, dental appointments etc. **must** be advised to the school in advance by completing an Application for Pupil Leave of Absence from School form – see below and include a copy of the appointment card for our records.

All unexpected absences such as illness should be confirmed and explained **on the first day of absence**. Please phone the school office on 020 8894 5729, leaving your child's full name, class and reason for absence and expected return date. The school office is staffed from 8.30am but any calls before this will be diverted to an answerphone.

If a child's absence has not been confirmed and explained by 10am on the first day, we will try to contact parents/carers by phone to clarify the situation. If we cannot contact the child's parents/carers, the absence will then be marked as unauthorised unless an explanation is received before the end of the school day. If confirmation is received within 5 working days the coding can be changed if appropriate.

Holiday absence during term time is not authorised.

The Headteacher is not authorised to grant term time leave except in wholly exceptional circumstances. All requests for such absence must be advised to the school in writing using the Pupil Leave of Absence form at least ten school days in advance of the first day of absence and cannot be retrospectively granted. Where a leave of absence is granted in wholly exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher will determine the number of sessions, and it will be granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. Parents/carers will receive a timely response. An unauthorised absence of 10 consecutive school sessions (each session being a morning or afternoon) or more may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice issued by the LA.

Unauthorised delayed return from authorised extended holidays is where a pupil fails to return on the agreed date. Where the Headteacher authorises term time leave for wholly exceptional circumstances it will be made clear the date of when the pupil is expected to return to school. Failure to return to school may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

In the circumstances where an absence is not authorised and where a pupil has unauthorised absence of at least 10 sessions (each session being a morning or afternoon) accrued in any six-week period the school will make a referral to the EWO who will issue a



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warning letter and set a 15 school day monitoring period with an expected level of attendance. If that expected level of attendance is not achieved, then a Fixed Penalty Notice would be considered. See Appendix 1 for examples of unauthorised absence.

Morning school registration takes place between 8.55 – 9.00am for Yrs 1 to 6 and 9.00 - 9.05am for Reception. While no lateness is acceptable, a late arrival (L) before registers close is defined as after 9am for Yrs 1 to 6 and after 9.05am for Reception. Registers close at 9.30am and arrivals after this time are classified as an unauthorised absence (U) unless an acceptable reason is given. We will write to parents of children whose lateness falls into this category.

All children in Yrs 1 to 6 should arrive at school before 8.55 and Reception children should arrive before 9am. All children arriving late must come to or be brought to the School Office to ensure they are recorded as being on the premises for health & safety reasons. Pupils or Parents/Carers must sign the Late Arrivals Book.

Persistent late arrival at school is where a child has arrived after registers have closed for a minimum of 10 sessions accrued in a six-week period. A warning letter will be sent, and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the LA. The school will monitor lateness and will inform parents as soon as a child is repeatedly or regularly late.

Monitoring of Effectiveness

The procedure outlined in this policy is monitored on a half-termly basis by Attendance Officers in both the Infant and Junior School and the designated Education Welfare Officer.

| Date of change | Summary of significant changes and the reasons |
|----------------|--|
| Summer 2022 | Clarity on the definition of 'Late' |
| Spring 2023 | Fixed Penalty Notices |



Application for Pupil Leave of Absence from School

Name of child: _____ Class: _____

Absence Dates From: _____ To: _____
(and times): _____

I wish to cancel my child's school dinners for the dates indicated: **Y/N/Packed Lunch**

Please note for Junior School children, if you do not confirm that you wish to cancel school dinners for all or some of the absence dates/times you will be charged for the cost of the meals that are ordered.

Reason for absence: _____

For Year 6 secondary school visits please record the details on this form for our records. Please note they are **not** classified as unauthorised absence.

I understand that my child is **NOT** entitled to any leave of absence during term time. I understand that any absence from school will be recorded by the school as unauthorised, unless the Headteacher has authorised the absence **before the start date** because of **wholly exceptional circumstances**. The Headteacher determines the number of days authorised and this is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. Delayed return from authorised term time leave is classed as unauthorised.

I accept responsibility for providing my child's education during the time that s/he is absent from school. The parent/carer is responsible for providing this work, **not the school**. For more details, please refer to our *Attendance and Lateness Policy*.

Name of parent/carer: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer) Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Headteacher/Deputy HT) Date: _____

Authorised/Not Authorised (Delete as applicable), **Added to Integris using code**

(Include brief description of absence reason on Integris)

Current Attendance Rate: _____ **Holiday Absence Letter sent:** _____



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Appendix 1

Unauthorised Absence: Below are examples of what constitutes unauthorised absence. This list is not exhaustive.

- Absence which occurs during a school or EWO monitoring period
- Persistent late arrival at school after registers close (9.30am)
- Pupils kept off school unnecessarily by parents/carers
- Absence which has never been properly explained, unsatisfactory explanations and/or absences that could have been avoided
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Term time leave not deemed as having wholly exceptional circumstances
- Where school has reasons to doubt the validity of the parental explanation