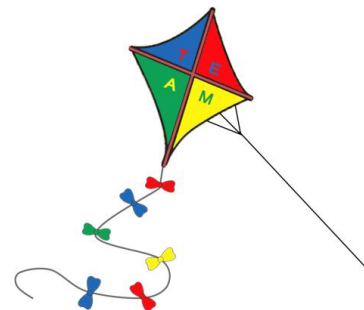


Twyford St Mary's C of E Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy 23-24 (Including register of admissions and attendance)



1. Principles

There is a very strong correlation, nationally, between good attendance and positive outcomes for pupils. The School maintains a live register of pupils' admission to school and daily attendance using the Arbor MIS system.

The School considers absence to be a potential matter of safeguarding therefore, we will:

1. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
2. Promote good attendance and address persistent or frequent absence.
3. Ensure every child has access to full-time education.
4. Address patterns of absence and promote good punctuality.
5. Evaluate the attendance of key groups and act proactively to address any concerns.
6. Nationally, persistent absenteeism is defined as 90% and below, Twyford St Mary's monitors all attendance that is below 95% in order to address poor attendance as early as possible.
7. Monitor and communicate attendance concerns using our agreed letters (see appendix 2).
8. The school will only authorise absences in term time for a period of up to 3 days (6 sessions in any one academic year) in very exceptional circumstances.
9. In line with DfE and Local Authority expectations Twyford St Mary's will not authorise absences for family holidays or to allow for extended periods of travel, holidays or in order to enable families to book cheaper travel options. Authorised absence of up to 3 days (6 sessions) for compassionate reasons will be granted for children of those serving in the Armed Forces where a parent is commencing active service overseas for an extended period of time, or retiring from active service.
10. Authorised absences for compassionate reasons are for up to three days (6 sessions).
11. Any authorised absences from school will be informed partly by the pupil's attendance record.
12. In line with DfE and Local Authority expectations, unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more (5 days or more) will incur a fixed penalty notice.

Parents must:

1. Support the School with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year as per parental legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act- see footnote).
2. Ensure any absence is clearly accounted for.
3. Inform the School on the first day of absence and every subsequent day, by emailing or phoning the School by 9.00am.
4. Only request an absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance by completing an Absence Request Form.
5. Avoid taking their child out of School for non-urgent medical or dental appointments (these absences still have a negative impact on children's attendance record).
6. Parents and Carers should contact the school to openly discuss anything that affects attendance at School.
7. Contact the School if their child is leaving, stating new address, contact number and education provider.
8. Respond to attendance concerns raised by the senior leadership of the school.

Practice (attendance):

- The School will ensure legal compliance with attendance regulations by keeping electronic daily attendance records.

- The school will follow DFE procedures to monitor and maintain positive attendance for all pupils (see appendix 1).
- The School will report attendance to parents within progress reports each academic year.
- The School will call on the first day of absence if we have not heard from parents. If contact has not been established within three days of absence, the School is obliged to either start a 'child missing in education procedure', contact the Police or conduct a home visit. If a child is supported by a Children's services CIN plan, this would be on the first day of unexplained absence.
- Only the school can authorise absence and only the Headteacher can grant leave of absence.
- The school office will contact parents when there is an initial concern with attendance and may subsequently invite them to a meeting, in order to proactively improve the child's attendance.
- If, following this consultation, attendance does not improve, a formal plan for attendance will be put into place by the school. At this point parents are at risk of receiving a penalty warning.
- If a child is absent for a further 10 or more half-day sessions (five School days) (during any 100 possible School sessions), a penalty notice will be issued or a referral to the Attendance Legal Panel (ALP) made.
- If a pupil is absent for 10 or more sessions (5 days) over 100 possible sessions, following a non-approved absence request or holiday without permission, a Penalty Notice can be issued.
- The School has a legal duty to report pupil absence without an explanation for 10 consecutive days to Children's Services (at risk of missing).
- Attendance advice and guidance on Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, and Showman families, can be found in the appendices.
- Attendance figures are shared with the DFE for monitoring and benchmarking purposes.

Practice (Punctuality)

- School begins between 8.35 and 8:55 at Twyford St Mary's.
- If a pupil arrives after 8:55 but before 9:10, their attendance will be registered as L (late before register closes).
- If a pupil arrives after 9:10, they will be registered as U (late after register closes).
- Senior Leaders will contact parents when punctuality becomes a concern.
- If punctuality does not improve after concerns are raised, all further lateness will be unauthorised.
- If a child then has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the School will issue Parents/Carers with a Penalty Notice.

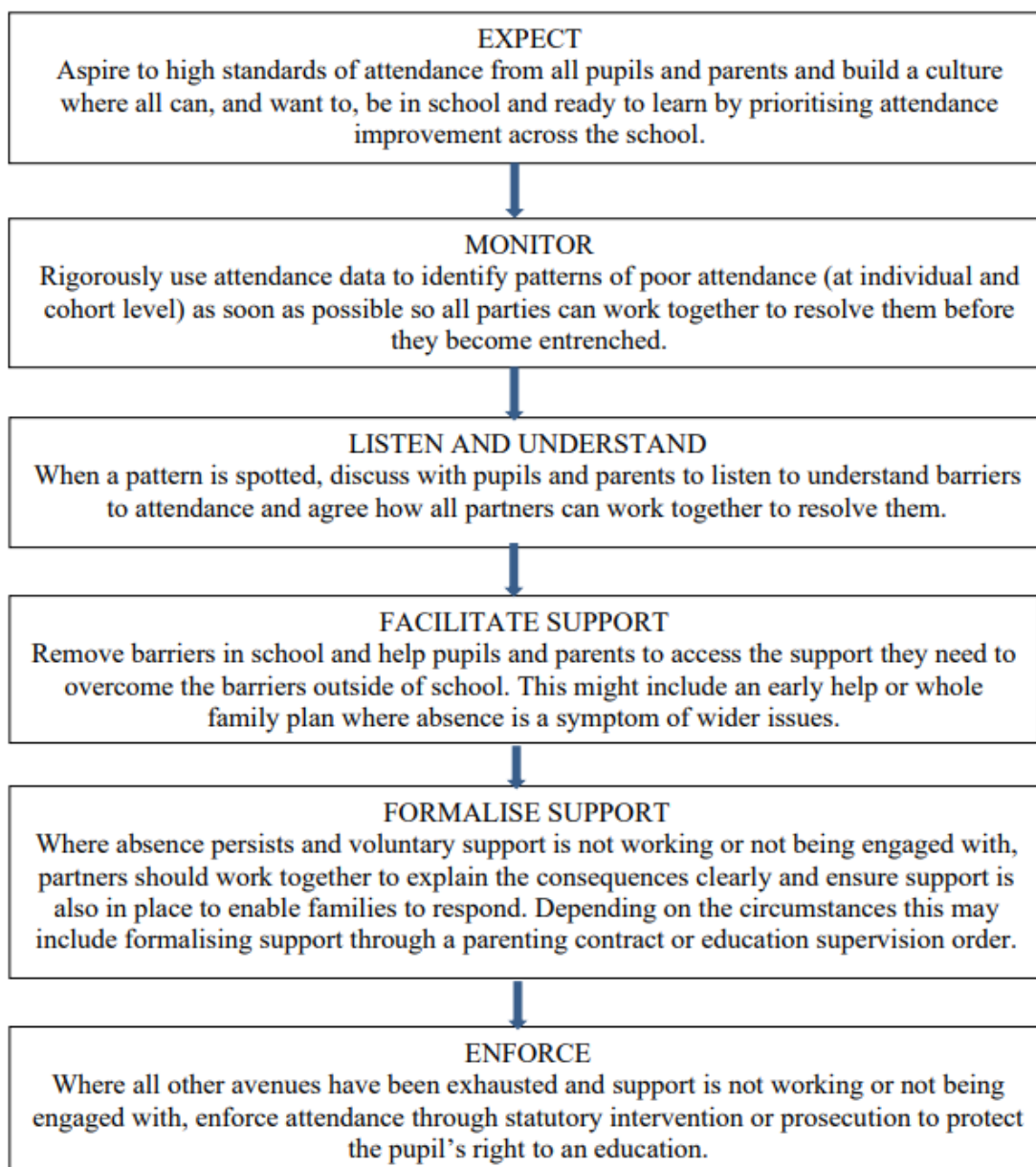
Agreed by Governors: Summer 2023
Review by Governors: Summer 2024

Footnote: The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states: The parent of every child of compulsory School age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable [a] to his age, ability and aptitude and [b] to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at School or otherwise. For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that pertains to children who are of compulsory School age and are registered at School is contained within this Act. Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend School.

Appendix 1: DFE Guidance on School Attendance Actions

Source: *Working together to improve school attendance* (DoE published May 2022)

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Appendix 2: Letters to families and Attendance Letter thresholds

Attendance Concerns- At Risk of 'Persistently Absent' (Pupils attendance is 90-95%)

DATE

To the family of X

I am writing regarding the attendance percentage for x for their first term of learning, which now stands at x%. The School's aim for attendance is 97%. We regularly monitor attendance in school and contact parents when attendance levels fall and pupils may become at risk of becoming 'persistently absent' (below 90% as per the DFE Guidance), so that we can offer support if necessary.

Whilst we realise that there are times when children are ill and unable to attend school, schools are directed by government legislation to ensure absence is only taken as a last resort. In light of this, we would like to share the following information with you:

Attendance of pupil	Approximate days absent by the end of the year	School time missed by the end of 5 years
90-95%	20	1/2 of a year
85-90%	30	1/3 of a year
Below 85%	More than 30	3/4 - 1 whole year

Research shows that setting good patterns of attendance from the start of school life really does impact positively on your child's attitude to learning and their educational success. If you are aware of any circumstances that are causing or may cause a problem with regular non-attendance, please do contact us.

Further information and guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to improved attendance that enables your child to reach their full potential.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sophie Davies
Headteacher

Attendance Concerns- 'Persistently Absent' (Below 90%)

DATE

To the Family of X,

On reviewing the attendance of «forename» «surname», there has been no significant improvement since (date)..... We have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s Registration Certificate for your information which illustrates that his/her current attendance is «percentage_attendance»%, considered to be in the 'persistently absent' category by the DFE. We are committed to working in partnership with families and, therefore, would like to invite you in for a meeting in order to discuss an action plan.

Given «forename»'s current level of absence, medical evidence will now be required to authorise any further absences. If your child is medically absent from this date onward, please complete the slip at the bottom of this letter, including acknowledgement from your surgery.

It is advised that holidays are not taken during term time as they are not authorised and medical appointments are organised outside of school hours. If there is no significant improvement in «forename»'s attendance, a penalty notice can be issued; however, we would like to avoid this and, therefore, look forward to building an action plan with you.

Please assist the school in ensuring a new positive trend in attendance for X as this will help us to support them in any learning areas they will have missed through their absence in the X term. The DFE state that parents are expected to 'ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies' and 'only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances'.

Further information and guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Thank you for your continued support in working together to improve your child's attendance for the remainder of the academic year

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sophie Davies
Headteacher

MEDICAL ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL AUTHORISATION

Please return this slip to School once completed.

Parent to complete:

Child's name: _____ Today's date: _____

Surgery to complete either section A or B:

A) Having met the above named child I would expect that they will return to school in _____ days' time.

B) Having met the above name child I can confirm they have a justified reason to why they have been absent due to a medical condition.

Proof of attendance (Surgery Stamp):

Appendix 3 Further guidance and supporting documents for parents and Schools:

a) HCC Attendance and Punctuality guidance for parents/carers:

www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents

b) Code of conduct – issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from Schools:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-issuing-penalty-notices-for-unauthorised-absence-from-schools.pdf>

c) Effective practice document for School attendance procedures and admissions for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children:

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrensservices/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-Section6.pdf>

d) HCC Promoting pupil attendance and recording absence:

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrensservices/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-maindocument.pdf>

e) Guidance for Schools on support and procedures for pursuing legal action for nonattendance:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/guidance-on-pursuing-legal-action-for-nonattendance.pdf>

f) Guidance for children on School roll but absent and at risk of missing in education:

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrensservices/HIAS/childrenatriskofmissingeducation.pdf>

g) Information on Penalty Notices for non-attendance at School:

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrensservices/HIAS/InformationonPenaltyNoticesfornon-attendanceatSchooladvicetoparentsandcarersleaflet-Nov2015revised.pdf>

h) School attendance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/School-attendance>

i) Possible penalties for non-attendance:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

j) DfE attendance guidance and documents:

<https://www.gov.uk/education/pupil-wellbeing-behaviour-andattendance#/education/School-attendance-and-absence>

k) HCC guidance on elective home education:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/educationinclusionsservice/electivehomeeducation>