

THE TELFORD PRIORY SCHOOL



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STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Telford Priory School Student Attendance Policy

A Framework for a Whole-School Attendance Policy

This framework for a whole-school attendance policy is based on the 5 'Ps' - namely, Philosophy, Principles, Procedures, Performance & Practice.

Philosophy

The Telford Priory School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all students. We believe that, if students are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance are crucial. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive, in partnership with parents and students, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

Principles

The school will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law
- Complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence
- Display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all students
- Promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence
- Consult with all members of the school community and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the attendance policy
- Ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors (EAB)
- Send newsletters each term to parents and students informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally update the school website with any attendance related issues
- Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a student is absent, she/he will be missed
- Have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members

Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

- Head Teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

The Telford Priory School Student Attendance Policy

- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Telford & Wrekin Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Procedures

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent student on the first morning of absence we will:

- Follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone/text message, or if the parent is unavailable send a standard letter requesting information
- Consider sending a second letter if an explanation has still not been received after three days of unexplained absence or send an Attendance Letter (SAL)
- Refer to the school's attendance officer, safeguarding officer or Education Welfare Officer (EWO), to follow up absence if no response is received after 5 days of absence and consider a referral to the '*Children & Family Locality Services*' or contact '*Family Connect*' if no contact can be made with the parent
- Invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM) after a maximum of 10 days absence, unless other action is planned. This meeting should include either the Head of House, Attendance or Safeguarding Officer, parent, student or the EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the student from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding attendance
- Help the student's re-integration where a student is returning to the school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a student returning after a long-term absence then an Individual Reintegration Programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the student as possible
- Contact **Family Connect 01952 385385** for further guidance on available support.

In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the students the importance of their education.

Performance

It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set before the autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the governing body (EAB) and in line with the government's national expectations. The governing body (EAB) must approve the target for attendance to be set for the following academic year. The targets should be sent to the appropriate people by the end of September. In compiling an Action Plan, the school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful

The Telford Priory School Student Attendance Policy

- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the academy, governing body and the local community
- Students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies

Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's Attendance and Safeguarding Officer/EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages
- A signed copy of any correspondence is retained by the school
- A referral is made to AST (the Attendance Support Team) for intervention

Appendix 1

An overview of how The Telford Priory School will promote good attendance;

Students with 95% or above attendance will be monitored by form tutors, they will be encouraged and rewarded through the school merit system, weekly, half termly, termly and yearly.

Students with 92% to 95% attendance to be monitored and supported by Assistant Heads of House weekly, via phone calls home, parental meetings, weekly form challenges, use of the school merit system and implementation of attendance contract. They will ensure tutors are promoting attendance with all students and give additional support where appropriate via the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer.

Students with 88% to 92% attendance to be monitored and supported by Heads of House via phone calls home, parental meetings, weekly form challenges, use of the school merit system and implementation of attendance contract. They will ensure tutors are promoting attendance with all students and give additional support where appropriate via the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer. Heads of House will meet with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer twice each half term, to discuss additional support and to consider if further action is appropriate.

Students with less than 88% attendance to be monitored by the School Attendance Officer, the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Education Welfare Officer, parents and students should be aware that at this point they may be at risk of prosecution for poor attendance or a referral to Children's Services via Family Connect

Appendix 2

The Government's national expectations of schools and students attendance

Every child should have an attendance of over 95%

All schools should have a whole school attendance of 95% or above

No child should have an attendance of below 90% (only exceptional circumstances should exempt a student from having an attendance lower than 90%)

The Telford Priory School expects every child to have an attendance of 95%