

Tottingham High School

Attendance Policy 2020-21



TOTTINGTON
HIGH SCHOOL
Excellence Through Partnership



School Mission Statement

“We pledge, through respectful relationships, to ensure all members of our community are supported in taking responsibility for their own learning, to become ‘well-rounded’ and caring individuals, with skills, attributes, qualifications and experiences to prepare them for their and our futures.”

“Excellence through Partnership”

ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Tottingon High School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all children and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all children feel safe, healthy, supported and valued. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DfE. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets to reflect national, Trust and local targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

AIMS AND PRIORITIES

1. To promote full attendance for all students.
2. To actively encourage attendance by promoting a positive school environment, where students can achieve and feel a sense of well-being.
3. To provide a safe, secure learning environment for students.
4. To reward excellent attendance and improved attendance.
5. To adhere to the statutory requirements in relation to the national criteria for attendance and the formal procedures concerning student registration.
6. To make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance and punctuality.
7. To make parents/carers and students aware of the importance of full school attendance to achieve academic success.

Attendance

We should always be aiming for 100% attendance but sometimes it's not always possible. Approx. 95-96% is average for student attendance across England.

Good attendance says a lot about a young person to future employers....it can show that the person is 'reliable', an important characteristic to employers.

Poor attendance says the opposite, and no matter how good grades may be, an employer does not want a worker who doesn't show up for work when she/he should. Plus, poor attendance affects grades. Research has found that approx. 90% attendance means that there may well be a drop of at least one full grade at GCSE.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE	DESCRIPTION	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
PERFECTION	100%	Excellent!!	Full attendance and something to be very proud of.
STAGE 1	Above 97%	Very Good	Equates to between 1 to 6 days off each year. Equates to missing between 5 and 30 lessons across the year but this shouldn't hinder progress.
STAGE 2	95% - 96.9%	Good	Equates to between 6 to 10 days off each year. Equates to missing between 30 and 50 lessons across the year and it 'shouldn't' hinder progress in any subjects...but might.
STAGE 3	90% - 94.9%	Below Average and concerning.	Equates to between 10 to 19 days off each year. 90% is half a day off every week! A person wouldn't be expected to keep a job <i>if he/she only attended 4½ days a week!!!</i> Equates to missing between 50 and 95 lessons across the year and it will probably hinder progress in most subjects. <i>Parents may be invited in to school dependent on absence pattern.</i>
STAGE 4 Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)	80% - 89.9%	Persistent Absentee – This is a real concern.	Equates to between 19 to 38 days off each year. 80% is one full day off every week!!!! Equates to missing between 95 and 190 lessons across the year and it WILL hinder progress in most, if not all subjects! <i>Parents will be asked to attend relevant meetings.</i>
STAGE 5 Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)	Below 80%	Persistent Absentee – Very Poor!!	Equates to more than 38 days off each year. That's over 7 weeks off school!! Equates to missing over 190 lessons across the year and it WILL DEFINITELY hinder progress in all subjects. <i>Parents will be asked to attend relevant meetings.</i>

ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

Students will be expected to be in school every day and:

- Arrive in school and to class on time - (persistent latecomers will be placed in 'late detentions').
- Remain in class unless given permission to leave.
- Remain in school unless given permission to leave. Students leaving must sign out at reception only when given staff permission.
- Catch up missing work following absence.

Parents/Carers will be expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day, unless too ill to attend.
- Make medical and other appointments outside of school hours except in emergencies.
- Where medical assistance is necessary in school hours, parents should produce medical evidence of the appointment.
- Organise family holidays during school holiday periods. Holidays will not be authorised and likely to carry a fine of taken during term time.
- Support their child and school in aiming for full attendance at school.
- Contact the student office on the first day and each subsequent day if their child is absent from school to explain the absence. Truancy texts will be sent out to all parents whose child is absent that morning and not accounted for. (Further details below)
- For extended periods of absences or recurrent absences further written confirmation may be requested.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40am. The registers will remain open for 45 minutes. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Students who are late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where lateness gives cause for concern the following procedures will be put in place to correct this.

1. Students who are late are met by the Attendance Officer and lateness is recorded and monitored.

2. These students are given a same day late detention for part of lunchtime if the reason for lateness is not acceptable.
3. Students who record three or more lates in a week they are set a 60min DT2 after school - pastoral detention.
4. If lateness continues Parents will be called in to sign a punctuality agreement / attend an attendance panel.
5. If lateness continues a penalty warning letter will be issued by the school.
6. Penalty notice served.

Rewards and Incentives

Students are rewarded for excellent attendance in a number of ways:

- Attendance is celebrated weekly in assemblies and in the Headteacher's weekly newsletter.
- Each week the form with the best attendance, the highest number of 100%'ers' will be recognised for their achievements.
- Individual recognition comes in many forms including postcards, phone calls home, assembly awards, and on Celebration of Excellence Evening.
- Half termly, termly and whole year achievements are also recognised.

Safeguarding

Should the child be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or should the school have child protection concerns, including FGM, then Designated Safeguarding lead will immediately notify Social Care of our concerns.

Staff Responsibilities

School staff will carry out a range of tasks to support students and families with attendance issues. Heads of Year, Form tutors and School Attendance Officers will monitor and record attendance and intervention will occur at various levels, including meetings with student and parents. Parents will be contacted by Form Tutors mostly in the first instance if there are concerns around attendance.

Parent/Care Responsibilities

Absence

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence.

If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day the school will use 'Truancy Call' to send a text message to secure an explanation. Where the school is unable to make contact by phone it will be recorded in student planners and a letter may be sent.

If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write again. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 4 weeks if no explanation can be obtained.

Medical Issues

If a child is absent due to an ongoing medical condition, it is imperative that parents/carers furnish school with full documents which outline medical evidence of the condition. This allows us to maintain correct records for any absences and where applicable apply for any special consideration that may be appropriate for external examinations.

Please note: ALL ABSENCES MUST BE ACCOUNTED FOR.

School Communication/Meetings with Parents/Carers

If a student's attendance drops into Stage 3, Form tutors will contact parents/carers if they feel the attendance pattern is showing signs of decreasing further or has not quickly moved back up into Stage 1 or 2. This may be in the form of a text. A Form Tutor may ask a parent/carer in to discuss any possible the issues.

If a student remains in Stage 3 and attendance is not improving, the respective Head of Year will contact parents/carers to discuss the matter and may invite parents/carers into school to discuss the issue.

If a student's attendance is in the lower end of Stage 3 and has been for a while with no sign of improvement and the Head of Year has already contacted parents/carers by phone/email and no improvement has occurred, parents/carers will be invited in for a formal meeting with the Head of Year to discuss how attendance could be improved. The **School Attendance Officer** may also be present at the meeting. At the meeting parents/carers may well be asked to supply medical evidence for absences up to this point and for any further absences until such times when absences improve.

For attendance in Stage 4 or 5 (unless for a one-off illness for a student with usually good attendance) parents/carers will be invited in for a formal meeting with relevant staff to discuss reasons for poor attendance and ways to support improvements. Head of Year and School Attendance Officer will be present and also a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Failure to Improve Attendance

School will always try to support students and families to improve attendance. Various social care and health professionals can assist school if relevant in this. But when necessary school will action legal steps relevant to Education Laws in place, to ensure children are at school accessing their education.

If a student's attendance fails to improve after any meeting, it may be necessary to complete case work with the family (if not already in place) including meetings, attendance contracts, home visits and reviews. If there is no success a referral will be made to the Local Authorities School Attendance Team (SAT) for further intervention.

Legal action to enforce school attendance:

Local councils and schools can use various legal powers if a child is missing school without a good reason. Parents/Cares can be given:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order

- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behavior Act 2003 empowers designated LA officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came in to force on 27th February 2004.

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- A holiday in term time that does not meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria.
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9.25am)

See link for further details <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

Holidays in term time

Term time holidays and extended leave will not be authorised for any student. The school will only grant leave of absence in '**Exceptional circumstances**'. Taking a holiday during school term because it would be cheaper, better weather or tagging it on to the beginning or end of a school break is not in the DfE view considered to be a 'special circumstance.'

Parents/carers must write to the Headteacher requesting leave of absence and must outline the exceptional circumstance that has led to this request.

If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned absence it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence and a penalty notice may be applied.**

Additional Information

Attendance at Off-Site Provision

Students who access this type of provision are dual rolled by THS. They are recorded as attended under the register code D (dual roll). Parents/carers who have a child attending alternative provision should notify the placement of any absence but can also contact school if they so wish. The provider will notify school of an absence. If parents/carers have failed to notify anyone, the outside provider will contact parents/carers for reason for absence. The Outside provider accepts responsibility for the safeguarding of this student whilst at their placement.

If the absence becomes an issue a review meeting is called and the placement may cease if no valid reason for absence is given. All placements operate on a 6 week cycle with review meetings scheduled.

In the case where THS is the outside provider for other schools i.e. it accepts PPP students, it will fulfil the duties of the outside provider listed above.

Other Providers deemed as 'Other Educational Placements'

This is recorded as a 'B' code - Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) - Approved Education Activity.

The external provider phones on the day to confirm the student is attending or not attending. The outside provider will also notify THS of the reason for absence. If the student is not attending and no reason for absence is given then THS will complete its usual absence procedures by contacting parents by call or text to ascertain the reason and record appropriately, notifying the relevant provider. If the absence becomes an issue a review meeting is called by the external provider.

Home Tuition/Hospital Teaching

This is recorded as a 'B' code - Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) - Approved Education Activity. THS will call the offsite (or home) provision on a daily basis to confirm attendance and engagement.

Work Experience Placements (W)

Using our bespoke work experience programme, student attendance is monitored by school. Attendance is checked by THS with the provider on a daily basis and recorded by THS. All employers are provided with the school contact details and a named person in case they need to report non-attendance or any other issues

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our school targets are:

2019-20 – Overall Absence – 5%
Unauthorised Absence – 0.6%
Attendance – 95%
PA – 14%

The registration system

The School will use *SIMS* for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age students	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. Alternatively electronic back-ups copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three years.

Appendices

The Law

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/her age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs s/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 appertains 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.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in: The Education [Student Registration] (England) Regulations 2006 (Amendment 2016)

Categorisation of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

Unauthorised absence

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

Authorised absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration