



Student Attendance Policy

One of the most effective ways that schools can improve achievement is by improving attendance. Even the best teachers struggle to raise the standards of children who are not in school regularly. Schools that relentlessly pursue good attendance also get better overall attainment and behaviour.

Improving attendance at school – Charlie Taylor 2012

Rationale

Tor Bridge High wants all students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and we recognise that excellent levels of attendance and punctuality can support students to achieve their full potential.

Aims

- To encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality by achieving an overall attendance of over 96%.
- To work together with parents or carers in order to remove any barriers to achieving high levels of attendance and punctuality for all students.
- To maximize attendance and reduce persistent absentees (students with an attendance below 90%).

Tor Bridge High

- Expects students to attend school regularly and to arrive on time in a fit condition to learn.
- Encourages good attendance and will investigate all unexplained absences.
- Staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absences and lateness
- Will work closely with parents/carers should there be attendance or punctuality concerns.

Students

- Will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Will attend all lessons punctually.
- Will not leave the School without permission.
- Will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school.

Parents/Carers

- Parents/Carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance.
- Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped to learn.
- Parents/Carers are responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first morning of any absence this should be confirmed in writing when their child returns to school.
- Parents/Carers will avoid arranging family holidays during term time.
- Parents/Carers will be kept informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record through Academic Mentoring

Registration (including Punctuality)

Student Attendance Policy

Registration is a legal requirement and creates an orderly start to the school day.

Procedures

- All staff will take a register in each lesson.
- Students are required to be registered by the tutor or teacher during the first ten minutes of each lesson.
- If a student arrives to the lesson late, the register should be updated by the teacher.
- Each student should be called by name and respond in the prescribed formal manner 'Here', 'Present', etc.
- Should a student arrive late (after tutorial) they should sign in at reception and this will be recorded in SIMS

AM/PM Registration

- The AM registration is open from 8.30am to 9.00am
- The PM registration takes place during the first ten minutes of period 5.

It is essential that the register is taken during this time. Students arriving after the first ten minutes should be recorded as late, with the number of minutes late and reason also recorded.

Attendance Codes

- Staff who are updating a students attendance code should use the mandatory DfE codes – see below

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	Non-compulsory school age absence	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

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

- All planned absences must be explained in advance. This advance notice needs to be done in writing by a parent/carer either in the planner or via email to the Pastoral Administrator of the 'Small School' that your child attends. Any extended absences of more than a few hours need to be recorded on an absence request form which can be collected from School Offices. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorise the absence.
- Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:
 - Genuine illness
 - Unavoidable medical/ dental appointments (but these should be made outside of school where possible)
 - Days of religious observance
 - Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement.
 - Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
 - When traveler students go on the road with their parents where the school is informed beforehand.
- Absence from school will not be authorised for
 - Any type of shopping
 - Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents
 - Minding the house
 - Birthdays
 - Resting after a late night
 - Relatives visiting or going to visit relatives
 - Because holidays are cheaper in term time
 - More than one day for a family wedding
- Parents/Carers should avoid booking family holidays during term time as these will not be authorised and there will be a fine per parent, per child.

Procedures for Following up Absence/Lateness

- Students **will not** be required to provide medical evidence for absences, but parents/carers will need to write a letter or email which includes the **start** and **end** dates of the illness as well as an explanation as to what has kept their child/ren off school.
- Students with attendance below 90% or for whom a pattern of poor attendance is emerging **will** be required to provide medical evidence. If this applies to your child/ren, the school or the Educational Welfare Officer will make contact with the GP to explain this evidence is needed.
- If a student is absent at morning registration this absence is recorded as unauthorised until the Pastoral Administrator has made contact with home and reasons for absence have been provided.
- If a student is absent for more than three consecutive days (without an explanation being forthcoming) the school will write to the parents and refer the case to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).
- If a student is late 3 or more times to tutorial or lessons in a two week period, students will be required to attend a B4 late school from 3.00-5.00pm with a Deputy/Head of School.
- If a student misses tutorial without any reasonable explanation it is classed as truancy and they will be issued with a B4 late school 3.00pm – 5.00pm.
- If a student is persistently late or absent, parents/carers and student will be invited to an 'Attendance Meeting with the Deputy or Head of School and EWO.
- Students who arrive late – either to school or to a lesson – may be required to make up the time either at break, lunch or after school that day after the parents/carers has been informed.

- The preferred method of communication from parents is email or letter. Emails and letters from parents/carers will be put into the child's S20 file as a permanent record of the absence.
- When a student is persistently late or absent without good reason the school will take action to effect improvement; where this intervention is unsuccessful the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Holidays during Term Time

- Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and the '10 days holiday authorisation at the Headteacher's discretion', has been abolished by the Government.
- Year 11, 12 & 13 students must not take holidays under any circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances do not include; cost of a holiday or already having paid for holiday, convenience, meeting with distant relatives, or not having a holiday for a long time or attending a wedding abroad.

Penalty Fines

There are an increasing number of Penalty Fines being issued to parents or carers, by the Plymouth City Council. The main reason for fines is unauthorised holidays. The charges are currently £60 per child, per parent (2015/16).

The Education Welfare Service can issue a Penalty Fine without formally warning a parent if there is evidence to suggest that the absence is due to a holiday and no application was made to the school, or an application was made and the holiday was unauthorised.

Failure to make this payment can escalate into the fine being doubled or ultimately prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Minimum required attendance

The Government's minimum requirement for attendance is 96% and this does not allow for much absenteeism through illness etc., therefore dental and GP appointments need to be made outside of the school day.

This does not apply to outpatient appointments where photocopies of appointment letters will need to be handed in to your child/ren's School Office.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

- In the belief that all students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs, the curriculum will be regularly reviewed.
- The curriculum will be monitored and developed to meet the needs of all students.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.
- Parents/Carers, students and staff are to be regularly reminded of the types of absence which are recognised as authorised and as unauthorised.
- The 'Vivo' rewards system will automatically reward students for arriving on time and attending each day. 'Vivo's' will also be given on a termly basis for those students who achieve 100% attendance.
- Students whose attendance falls beneath 96% will be set targets for improvement. These targets will be regularly reviewed by the Tutor/D/HOS and recorded on the ILP.
- Good (and improved) attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded through awards given by Deputy/Head of School.
- Regular, structured meetings will be held with the school's Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those students whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern.
- Parents/Carers will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Termly reports will be made by the Headteacher to the school's Governing Body on the issue of attendance/punctuality.
- Students are to be constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance.

- Students who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually-tailored programmes which enables them to make rapid progress and get back on track.
- All issues which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by the Tutor/Deputy/Head of School
- At the end of every half term the Head of School will write to the parents of those students whose attendance is a cause for concern/congratulation.
- Visits to partner primary schools will be made in order to ensure the fullest support for all students during secondary transfer and in order to help identify any students who may need special help.
- Every term there will be a Holistic Intervention Meeting to discuss students with complex needs and at risk of exclusion. This panel of external agencies including the Educational Psychologist, EWO, Police, Communication & Interaction Team, Youth Service etc. work with members of staff in school to support the most vulnerable students.
- The School Family Support Advisor will work with identified students within each school to target focused interventions to raise attendance. The progress of these interventions will be analysed through tracking data and reported back at Heads of School Meetings.

Collection of Attendance Data

- Terms 1-6 the following data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends
- whole school attendance rates are collected weekly
- numbers and proportion of persistent absentee students
- attendance/absence rates for particular cohorts and groups (year groups, gender, FSM, SEND, etc.)
- A range of attendance data will be analysed by Curriculum Leaders/D/HOS at Gold Star or equivalent meetings in order to identify trends and patterns and to link attendance with attainment.
- Student-level attendance data will be analysed on a termly basis in order to identify persistent absentees and those students at risk of becoming persistent absentees.
- Attendance data will be used to set a range of attendance targets for the whole school and for identified cohorts in conjunction with the School Improvement Partner and governors
- All students will be set individual targets. This target setting will be carried out at Academic Mentoring and recorded on the Individual Learning Plan.

Tor Bridge High is committed to ensuring the General Data Protection Regulation GDPR is adhered to at all times within the schools. We will ensure that all data we are given is processed in line with our organisations Data Protection Policies and in line with your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulations.

Owner:	Headteacher
Review Date:	May 2019
Next Review Date:	May 2022

Attendance Target Setting, Monitoring & Individual Tasks and Responsibilities

To support target setting students will receive attendance targets in statements. Students will also be issued with a guide to attendance to support their targets. Tutors will issue the targets at Review Days based on their attendance at School so far this academic year.

- 96 – 100%: Continue to model the highest standards of attendance to your peers.
Encourage others in your tutor group to attend well.
- 93 – 95%: Avoid any absence other than serious illness; work harder at being in school every day.
Work towards becoming a Tor Bridge High Attendance Leader
- 90 - 93%: Ensure you take immediate action to improve your attendance as you will not be making as much progress as you should.
Reduce the number of days you are ill by not being off unless you are physically sick. Headaches, stomach-aches, coughs and colds are not reasons to take time off school. If you take time off, come back as soon as you are up and about.
- >90%: Urgently improve your attendance as you will not be making progress and your achievement is suffering. Don't take time off for minor illnesses such as sore throats, coughs, colds or when on antibiotics. Make sure your parent/carer contacts the School whenever you are absent. If your attendance does not improve your parents/carers may be fined for not helping you to attend school.

Monitoring – Some or all of the methods below will be used to maintain high standards of attendance

All students:

- Will be monitored daily on SIMS
- Tutors to monitor their tutees through weekly returns

Students with attendance below 96%

- Attendance will be discussed at Academic Mentoring and Subject Parents Evenings and attendance targets will be set and monitored.
- Liaising with CL's as necessary
- Sending work home
- For long term absence reintegration plans will be made

Deputy/Head of School /Pastoral Admin, to identify students from this group they are working with through discussion with EWO. Even if the student has been referred to the EWO or is going to court, **all staff, tutor, teacher, Education Welfare Advisor (EWA), D/HOS must maintain a positive working relationship with the student through regular contact to parents/carers and the student.**

Roles and Responsibilities

Although all members of the School community are responsible for maintaining high levels of attendance in order for our students to achieve, there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities depending on the individual needs of the student.

Tutor

Responsible for promoting good attendance within the tutor group, and for monitoring individual students.

The tutor will work towards improving the tutor group attendance year on year by;

- Make the tutor group welcoming and inviting for all students
- Arriving to registration on time
- Take a register each morning
- Work with individuals and their parents/carers to improve their attendance.
- Clear up unauthorised absences.
- Use registration to discuss attendance matters

- Work with students who have not been attending registration by finding them later in the day, putting them on attendance report, contacting home.
- Keep evidence in the tutor folder of all your attendance interventions
- Remind tutees that their parents/carers must phone the School on the first day of an absence and when their child returns to school and pass all notes regarding attendance to the School's Offices to store in the S20
- Encourage parents to use the planner to record reasons for absence or contact
- Email subject teachers for work when a tutee has a serious illness.
- Email subject teachers when a student has returned from a serious illness so that the teacher can make an action plan for the student to 'catch-up'.

DHOS

Responsible for attendance monitoring within their School

- Make attendance a priority within the Tutor Team, and with students
- Attend weekly meetings with Pastoral Administrator, EWA & EWO to discuss each tutor group and identify students and identify key workers for each of these students, and keep records of these meetings
- Work with individuals and their parents/carers to improve their attendance, working on building positive relationships with the parents/carers of poor attenders, through regular contact by phone, meetings and letter.
- Promote the attendance message through the year group they are responsible for
- Ensure tutors are clearing their absences weekly
- Agree on EWO attendance referrals
- Ensure contact is maintained with students who have been referred to the EWO
- Arrange Attendance Meetings every week with the EWO
- Attends Holistic Intervention Meetings (HIM) Termly

HOS

Strategic leaders for attendance within their own school and across Tor Bridge High

- Analyses in Heads of School meetings
- Liaise with Deputy Head of Schools to discuss attendance within year groups
- Promote whole school attendance targets
- Write the attendance strand of the SIP and monitor progress on this every 6 weeks
- Support the tutor teams to maintain high standards in attendance monitoring
- Oversight of all attendance interventions and Attendance Action Plans
- Attend HIM Meetings every term

Pastoral Administrators

Responsible for SIMS, first day calling

- Initiate data for first day calls
- Make phone calls home
- Input absences on SIMS
- Work with tutors to clear up unauthorised absences
- Produce missing registers reports
- Meet with D/HOS, EWO and FSA each week
- Keep an up to date record of PA students with progress mapped
- Alert tutors of patterns and trends,
- Produce weekly analysis of their school attendance – overall and groups
- Send out letters relating to attendance matters

Pastoral Administrator with attendance responsibility

- As above, plus produce attendance updates weekly of overall, FSM, Non-FSM, LAC and email to SALT
- Prepare a full attendance report in the last week of every term (1-6)

Use SIMS to identify overall and individual school attendance from the start of the year to the current date. Compare this data with the previous two years. Record the results in a word document report.

- Record the overall whole school PA and for each school and compare with the previous two years.
- Find the overall whole school and individual schools attendance for FSM, Statement, School Action Plus, School Action, Boys and Girls and record each terms compared to the previous two years.
- Email the Tor Bridge High Termly Attendance Report to Deputy/Head of School & Headteacher on the last Friday of each the term.

Additional Attendance Responsibilities

Education Welfare Advisor (EWA)

Responsible for focused interventions with students in each school

- Identify approximately 10 students per school to work with to improve their attendance (90% - 93%)
- Follows the principles of weekly intervention with students to examine attendance and progress. Make contact with their parents/carers weekly, signpost to external agencies
- To keep attendance and assessment data on these fifteen students through SIMS user defined groups.
- To attend Head of Schools meeting weekly to feedback on the progress of these students (last 15 minutes)

EWO – Educational Welfare Officer

Responsible for dealing with the legal requirement for students to attend the School

- Acts upon referrals
- Visits parents/carers to ensure students attend the School
- Issues Penalty Letters & Fines
- Fast tracks to Prosecution
- Meets weekly with Deputy Head of School, Family Support Advisor and Pastoral Administrator
- Attends Attendance Meetings

Subject Teacher

Responsible for attendance in their lessons

- Identifies students who are in school but not in the lesson and informs the School Office by email or note that the student is absent. Whole school emails about student absence need to be sent via the school office.
- Informs Curriculum Leader of attendance issues
- Places students on Curriculum Attendance Report
- Ensure students who have been ill can have 'catch up' notes
- Puts home-learning on Frog so that students who are absent can catch up

Curriculum Leader

Responsible for monitoring attendance in their curriculum area

- Follows up on subject teacher requests for support on attendance and contacts home
- Sets attendance targets in their curriculum area and monitors
- Puts systems in place to reintegrate students or catch up on missed work

Headteacher

Accountable for the attendance at Tor Bridge High

- Reports to Governors termly on whole and individual school attendance, groups including Persistent Absence, FSM, Gender and SEND
- Monitors the School Improvement Plan which includes an attendance target of 95.5% (2015-16).