



Telford Infant School

LOVING LEARNING

Every child to be an inquisitive, resilient and successful learner who is eager for their next challenge.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Manager:	Headteacher
Date of latest update:	January 2023
Date of next review:	January 2025

*This Policy is available for Staff and Governors on One Drive.
It is also available for parents on the school website and on request from the school office.*

1) INTRODUCTION

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this policy is written to reflect these laws as well as the guidance provided by the Department for Education. Telford Infant School's Attendance and Punctuality Policy reflects the key principles of the DfE guidance: Working together to improve school attendance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

At Telford Infant School we believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial and we will do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all children. We strive to create a calm, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to attend and are keen and ready to learn.

The attendance and punctuality of every child are monitored closely. We aim to identify any problems that prevent attendance or punctuality and strive to address these in partnership with families as efficiently as possible so that pupils can benefit from all the learning opportunities on offer and make good progress. We recognise the vital role that families play in the success of this policy and all school staff work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

2) AIMS

At Telford Infant School, through the implementation of this policy, we aim to achieve good attendance and punctuality by:

- creating a stimulating and exciting learning environment which fosters a desire in children not to want to miss a single day of their schooling;
- informing parents of their own legal responsibility and school policy;
- working closely with and supporting families to ensure any barriers to good attendance are overcome;
- supporting teachers and school management in promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality;
- ensuring a consistent approach and high expectations across the school – a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and punctuality;
- regularly and thoroughly monitoring attendance for every child;
- working in partnership with other schools and external agencies.

3) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

High levels of attendance and good punctuality is the responsibility of all.
Annex A provides the DfE Summary Table of responsibilities for school attendance – Sept 2022.

The name and contact details of the senior leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school are:

Mrs Siân Oustayiannis – Headteacher
admin2326@welearn365.com

Mrs Michelle Smith – Governor with responsibility for attendance
admin2326@welearn365.com

The name and contact details of the staff member parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis is:

Mrs Lorraine Bains – Admin Assistant
admin2326@welearn365.com
Tel: 01926 425544

4) ABSENCES

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Only the school in the context of the law can approve absence. The fact that a parent has offered a note, phoned, or made personal contact in relation to a particular absence does not of itself oblige the school to accept it.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school, not by the parent, as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised Absences

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time or emergencies.

Religious Observance may also be authorised where a day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

The school has concern and sympathy for families during times of bereavement and will use its discretion to authorise an agreed period of absence.

If the total length of an authorised absence from school, eg due to a medical condition, is expected to exceed 4 weeks the school will refer to the Local Education Authority to seek support from the appropriate service – for example the Flexible Learning team can support children needing long term medical care. If appropriate, and if the child is able to undertake some learning at home, then the school will liaise with parents and ensure that work is sent home for the child to complete.

Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' has been granted. This type of absence may lead to the school referring to the Local Authority – Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) - for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Persistent and Severe Absenteeism

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and the school need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

A pupil is defined by the Government as being severely absent when they miss 50% or more schooling across the school year for any reason.

The school understands that there will be pupils who will have low absences due to diagnosed, ongoing medical conditions and the school will work closely with parents of those pupils to support attendance and access to education.

Children Missing from Education

Warwickshire County Council has a legal duty to identify children missing education and to make sure they return to education wherever possible and schools are required to take appropriate action for children missing education. The school is concerned about any child who may be missing from education, as it might not be just their educational development at risk but also their safety and wellbeing and will make a referral to WCC.

5) PUNCTUALITY

We actively discourage late arrival at school. A child arriving late at school seriously disrupts not only his or her own learning but also that of others. Exceptional circumstances occasionally arise and these should be discussed with the Class teacher or Headteacher.

Children are able to enter their classroom between 8.45am and 8.55am in order to prepare themselves for the school day. A bell rings at 8.55am when external classroom doors are closed after which point children must be brought into school through the main school entrance and their parent/carer must sign them in on an Arrival slip. Any child arriving between 8.55am and 9.25am, when registers are closed, is marked late – L code.

If a child arrives late after registers are closed (9.25am – half an hour after the start of the school day), with no adequate explanation, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence – U code.

The school gates are closed by the caretaker as soon after 8.55 am as is possible. All children late after the 8.55am bell rings are to be brought to the school office where a member of staff will ensure that their parent or carer signs them in and provide a reason for the late arrival.

Punctuality is analysed alongside attendance. Where there are more than five occasions of lateness the class teacher or Headteacher will contact the parent or carer to remind them their responsibility to ensure their child arrives at school on time and to sign post support for any barriers they may be experiencing. If lateness persists following a further five late occasions the parent will be asked to make an appointment to see the Head teacher and Early Help may be offered if appropriate to help address any barriers the family are facing. If punctuality does not improve a referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service may be made.

Parents should not be late to collect their children. The school day ends at 3.20pm and parents should be on the playground ready to collect them at this time or have made other arrangements for them eg. attendance at SMILES or other after school club run on the school site; collection by a child minder or other named adult. If a child has not been collected by 3.30pm the class teacher or a member of the office team will phone their parent. Where a parent is frequently late collecting their child the Headteacher will follow this up with the parent and offer Early Help if appropriate.

6) SCHOOL PROCEDURES RELATING TO ABSENCE

In the case of absence due to illness, medical or dental appointments a parent or carer must notify the school in person at the school office or by a telephone call (01926 425544) before the beginning of the school day or by 9.15am at the latest.

First Day Contact - if a child is not present at registration and no explanation has been given then a phone call will be made to the child's parents/carers by the school office to confirm their whereabouts and safety. If the person with first priority on the child's personal data sheet cannot be contacted then other contacts on that list will be phoned. If we still cannot confirm the whereabouts of the child then we will phone schools that other siblings attend, if known, and if we have concerns related to Safeguarding a Designated Safeguarding Lead will be alerted and a phone call made to the MASH.

If a child is collected by their parent/carers from the school after registration but before the end of the school day at 3.20pm then this must be recorded on a Departure slip at the school office, with a reason for collection provided. If the child is able to return before the end of the school day then they should be brought back to the school office and their re-entry to school must be recorded on an Arrival slip.

The decision to phone parents to collect when a child is feeling unwell or has an accident during the school day is made by the Class teacher /Paediatric First Aider and seconded by a Phase Leader or other member of the Senior Leadership Team and will depend on individual cases.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence requests should be made on the following form - Warwickshire County Council's 'Application for Leave of Absence for a School Pupil in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances Only'. Annex B. Hard copy available from the school office.

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 Head Teacher 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 school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. ie the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 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 Warwickshire County 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.

7) MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

The School Office takes responsibility for first day absence calls and for recording reasons for absence. The Headteacher and is alerted if there are any concerns.

The Headteacher monitors attendance on an ongoing basis through FFT Aspire reports and using SIMs data – the attendance and punctuality of individual children causing concern are

scrutinised as are attendance rates for specific groups eg. classes, across year groups, children on the SEND register, children eligible for the Pupil Premium grant. Comparisons are drawn with national attendance data.

Any concerns are discussed with class teachers and are followed up as appropriate with parents. Attendance data of children whose attendance is below 92% is also scrutinised by Senior Leaders and Class teachers during half termly Pupil Progress meetings

Attendance %s and any lates are included on all children's Target Sheets in the Autumn and Spring terms and end of year reports to allow all parents to see their child's individual attendance. Parents will be provided with a print out of their child's SIMs attendance report on request from the office on request, at any point on the school year.

The Headteacher, Admin Assistant and Governor with responsibility for Attendance meet at least termly and an Attendance and Punctuality monitoring report is created for the Full Governing Board based on their findings. Data is benchmarked against other schools as well as nationally and school trends are also analysed.

The Full Governing Board sets high expectations for and recognise the importance of high school attendance for every child and they promote this across the school's ethos and through policies. Each year they nominate a governor with responsibility for attendance and punctuality. They ensure that leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties and ensure that staff receive appropriate training. An Attendance report is presented termly to governors who scrutinise the data and hold senior leaders to account.

The school monitors the attendance of all children and use a staged approach to address any issues. We wish to work in partnership with families to support the best possible outcomes for their children.

Stage 1 – Initial Concern

- Child's attendance falls below 97%*.
- Class teacher raises concerns with parent/carer.

*The school understands that very early on in the school year missing only a day or two may result in a child's % attendance falling below 97% and may monitor at this point rather than contact parent.

Stage 2

- Child's attendance level declines further.
- Parents/carers are asked to meet with the class teacher to discuss concerns. Any barriers are discussed and support offered where appropriate.
- An individual short term attendance target is agreed.

Stage 3

- Despite previous intervention, the child's attendance level is still not improving and their attendance falls to 90% (persistent absence).
- Parents/carers are invited to school for a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss concerns and the potential support from external agencies (eg. Early Help). A formal individual attendance target is set and parents advised that any absence during the period will be unauthorised, unless covered by appropriate medical evidence. If a parent/carer declines the offer of a meeting, targets will be set and parents will be sent a letter outlining the target and an agreed target review date.
- Any children failing to show an appropriate level of improvement may be discussed with Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS).

The school understands that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term diagnosed medical conditions and we work in partnership with their parents to put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their education.

8) COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

- Through the school website, newsletters and specific letters related to attendance, the Headteacher is responsible for informing parents of the school's policy and procedures on attendance and punctuality.
- The Class Teacher will communicate with parents at any point that a child's absence or punctuality during a term is causing a concern – this may be a phone call or a face to face conversation. Occasionally this may be by email.
- Through the school's staged approach for following up low attendance – see above.
- Attendance concerns will be communicated to as senior leader (usually the Headteacher) to a child's new school when transferring to a new setting.

ANNEX A - Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance – Sept 2022

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	<p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p>

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.	Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.

ANNEX B – 'Application for Leave of Absence for a School Pupil in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances Only'

**Warwickshire County Council
Communities Directorate**

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY**

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised
- Unauthorised Leave of Absences will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service upon the child's return to school

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____

First Date of Proposed Absence: _____ Last date of Proposed Absence: _____

Expected date of return to school: _____

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence *(they can only be exceptional circumstances) (see overleaf before completing)*

.....
.....
.....

Total Days Requested On This Occasion

(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for _____ *(Insert child/children's name)*

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____

1st date of absence requested by parents: Last date of absence requested by parents:

Expected date of return to school (as advised by parents):

Absence Authorised: Yes/No

The reasons for this decision are:

- LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: Date:

- **Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**
A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides

AND
B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

-
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
 - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
 - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
 - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.
-

Parents:

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.
3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.