



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

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Aims

Tarka Learning Partnership (TLP) is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all children/students. For pupils to gain the best from their time at one of the Trust's schools, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all children/young persons. We understand that pupils can be genuinely ill and absent for other justifiable reasons such as supporting a family with a bereavement. There will be young people who, for long term health reasons, need time out of school which needs to be carefully managed by the agencies involved and this policy seeks to support and not to imply blame or guilt. TLP actively promotes excellent attendance and discourages unjustified absence. TLP recognises that promoting excellent attendance and punctuality prepares children for the disciplines of both future education and adult working life.

Guiding Principles

- It is the responsibility of everyone in each Academy to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Each Academy needs to ensure that all young people access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows them to realise their potential.
- Each Academy will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each pupil can engage in all opportunities offered.
- Each Academy will work with children and their families to ensure every child attends regularly and punctually.
- Each Academy will challenge the behaviour of those children and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Each Academy will provide an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
- Each Academy will use the BromCom attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.
- Each Academy will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2003: 'Every Child Matters' by implementing this policy in a consistent manner.
- Each Academy will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.
- Each Academy will have regard to those pupils who have long term health conditions where outside agencies require attendance at appointments and time in hospital during school hours. Each Academy will seek to support the child's needs following prior, during and after treatment where possible.

What parents can expect from each Academy:

- We will promote excellent attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where a child's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support children to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality.
- We will support children returning to school after prolonged absence.

What each Academy expects from Children/Young Persons:

- To attend regularly and on time
- To be punctual to all lessons
- To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the appropriate place as per the individual Academy's system. All absences should be accounted for by parents.
- To ensure they register at the school office if on occasion they are late as per the individual Academy's system

What each Academy expects from Parents/Carers:

- To ensure their child/young person attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child/young person attends every day the Academy is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child/young person away from the Academy for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation (see overleaf).
- To arrange holidays during Academy holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances (see below)
- To immediately inform the Academy Reception if their child is unable to attend, including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
- If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers should contact the Academy on each day of absence.

Registration

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at 8.45am at the start of the morning session and 1.05pm (YrR)/ 1.20pm (Yr1-6) at the start of the afternoon session. Nursery at 8.45am and 12.45pm.
- Children are expected to arrive before 8.45am in order to be ready for the start of the first lesson at 8.45am.
- Registers close at 8.50am in the morning. After 8.50am children will be marked as late, after 9.15 children will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation has been received. For the afternoon session registers close at 1.05pm (YrR) and 1.20pm (Yr1-6)
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1).
- Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published 2012 by the DfE.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the Academy has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the Academy can do this.

- Parents/carers should contact the Academy Reception (by telephone) on the morning of absence (preferably before 8.25am giving a reason and an expected date of return.
- Absence may be authorised for such reasons as:
 - Significant illness
 - Unavoidable and non-routine medical/dental appointments
 - Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement
 - Day of religious observance (see Appendix 2)
 - Exclusion
- Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:

- Looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
 - Birthdays, weddings and other family celebrations
 - Days out,
 - Shopping trips
 - Family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note, family holidays during term time will not normally be approved).
- Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, children should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. The academy will require evidence of medical appointment. If a child isn't present for registration due to a medical appointment but is present for the majority of the session a code can be amended to mark the child as present for the session. An Academy can where there are valid reasons authorise up to 10 medical absences (equivalent of 5 school days: each school day made up of 2 sessions) without evidence from a medical authority, but an Academy reserves the right to ask for medical evidence for absence above 10 sessions.
 - Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a young person/child's absence, the Academy will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise/unauthorise accordingly.
 - Absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.
 - Parents/carers should not take their children out of school for days out, to attend sporting events, etc.

How we Respond to Absence/Lateness

- If a young person/child is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the Academy will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be via phone which we will attempt to phone mobile numbers or landline for the priority contact number. Parents/carers are able to respond directly upon receiving this call. Alternatively, where a message has been left by the Academy, a parent should contact the Academy Reception. The Academy asks that parents/carers ensure that the Academy has the most up to date contact details at all times including at least one landline contact number where possible.
- Where a child's/young person's absence is cause for concern, the Academy will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school or visit parents/carers at home.
- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, the Fast Track to Attendance process will be followed (Appendix 3). Fixed Penalty notices may be issued in line with Local Authority's Code of Attendance

Persistent Absence

Nationally, a child/young person becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason and results in the child having an attendance figure of 90% or less. Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any child whose attendance has reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- An action plan to improve attendance will be created which may involve a DAF and referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant Academy staff and parents/carers.
- Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the Academy, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.
- The School and Trust reserves the right to use the Educational Welfare Services to support the absence policy and work with families to resolve attendance and punctuality matters.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority and Department for Education via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Any absence interrupts the continuity of child's learning. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take children out of school for holidays during term time.

It is expected that a Request Form is submitted to the Academy/School Office at least **4 weeks** in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. The Academy has the right to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice on parents/carers who insist on taking their children out of school without authorisation. Fixed penalties require **each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child** if paid within 21 days or **£120** if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (with effect from September 2015). Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any child taking leave of absence without prior notification to the Academy.

Re-integration following Long-term Absence

Where a child has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, the Academy will:

- Welcome the child back to the Academy and value their return.
- Provide support for the child/young person in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the Academy.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
- Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.
- Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the young person's/child's return if appropriate.

Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- Children and young people are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve, i.e. reports and attendance awards.
- Where appropriate, children whose attendance falls below the appropriate target for the Academy will be set a target for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed.
- Excellent attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded.
- Children/ young people, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of excellent attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Academy Attendance Officer at any time to discuss their child's/ young person's attendance.
- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those children/ young person whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Children/ young people who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into the Academy.
- Children/ young person's attendance will be reported at least annually in line with our annual pupil report system.

Attendance Data and Targets

- The Academy will set its own attendance target, taking into account National attendance figures to be approved by the Board of Directors.
- The target for all children is to strive for 100% attendance. Only by achieving full attendance can children expect to achieve their full potential.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the Academy's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual child data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on termly basis to the Local Governing Body, the Trust Central Team and the Board of Directors
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority and DfE

- The Academy will use the Brom Com to monitor attendance on a daily, monthly and termly basis.

Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- The Academy works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Fixed Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities: School level insert

All members of the Academy have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

Office Staff

- Will monitor registration on a daily basis and send a daily report of absence and lateness to the Head Teacher.
- Will receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding a child's absence.
- Will contact parents/carers regarding a child's absence to arrange a meeting.
- Will produce Attendance reports on a monthly basis.
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Class teachers (Level 1)

- Welcome and value the attendance of all children to school.
- Will ensure all children are accurately registered.
- Will ensure that children know the register is being taken.
- Will identify a child's absence to lessons and take appropriate action.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will discuss absence and attendance weekly with children.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will work with identified children, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.
- Will ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Office.
- Discuss attendance with parents/carers at Parent evenings or other meetings organized to discuss an initial concern about attendance or punctuality.

Attendance Officer (Level 2)

- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly.
- Will discuss absence and attendance concerns with children and set targets for improvement.
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified.
- Will support children to improve their attendance.
- Will promote attendance through assemblies
- Will work with other members of staff to share information and support children and their parents/carers to improve attendance

The Head Teacher (Level 3)

- Will take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the Academy, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Will ensure that the Academy attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Will ensure the whole Academy ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality.

- Will take a lead on cases of poor attendance and punctuality, which are persistent
- Report to the Education Welfare Officer (where employed) on attendance
- Monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience.
- Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning

APPENDIX 1

DfE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
B	Off-site Educational Activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
D	Dual Registered – at another educational establishment	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	
F	Extended family holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT authorised by the school <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	
H	Family holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence	
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
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 supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence	
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Enforced Closure)	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z	Pupil not yet on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	

APPENDIX 2

Religious Observance

Authorised absence may be granted for religious observance, for example, Eid. The Department for Education definition is as follows:

“Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.”

If the religious body has not set the day apart, there is no requirement for the Academy to approve the absence or grant leave of absence.

Individual religions and their religious observance are too numerous to detail in this document.

Parents should contact the Academy to request leave of absence for all religious observance.

APPLICATION FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL (parents of Nursery Children are permitted leave for holidays without prior permission, A separate Nursery absence form needs to be filled in Appendix 5)

Parents do **not** have a right to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. By law you must ask permission for your child to miss school. If you don't you risk a £60/120 penalty notice. Newport Community School Primary Academy follows a clear policy on holiday absence, but it is up to the Head Teacher of the school to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. A copy of the full Attendance and Punctuality Policy is available on the School's website)

Parents wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed leave.

Some things to consider in respect of taking children out of school during term time:

- Children/young people must attend school regularly to achieve their full potential
- Children/young people who are kept out of school can feel vulnerable and miss out on key work
- Family Holidays in term time are disruptive to children's learning and no holidays will be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances. Cost is not an exceptional circumstance.
- On average children who miss 10 or more days per school year fall behind significantly and can lose significant ground on their peers.

Newport Community School Primary Academy states that absence during term time **cannot be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances.**

If, under the above circumstances, parents or carers take their child from school for a holiday, their child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the class register.

No holidays will be authorised in term time except in exceptional circumstances.

Other Absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible) – evidence may be requested by the school
- Day of religious observance (one day only)
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents
- When a child is competing in a sport or playing an instrument at county, regional or national level. (Evidence may be requested by the school)

Application Form

Parents wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete the form overleaf and return it to school for authorisation.

Thank you

Head Teacher

PLEASE COMPLETE ONE APPLICATION PER CHILD

(Parents of Nursery Children are permitted to request holiday leave in term time if at the same time of the holiday the child is in Nursery. Please use the appropriate form for a nursery child.)

WARNING: If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and this may make you liable to a £60/120.* (* Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 28 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 28 days and before 42 days). (See the School's Attendance and Punctuality Policy)

PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)

Surname of child/young person		First name	
Class		Year Group	
Surname of parent/guardian		First name	
About the request for your child's leave of absence (attach supporting information where necessary)	Reason for absence request. Holidays <u>will not</u> be granted unless under exceptional circumstances.		
	Did s(he) have leave of absence during term-time in the previous school year ?		Yes / No
Length of absence (school days)		From (date)	To (date)
Telephone contact (if school wishes to discuss this request)			
Parent/guardian Signature		Date	

Newport Community School Primary Academy SECTION

Request for absence	YR – Y6 PUPILS		
	(i) approved	<input type="text"/>	school days
	(ii) Not approved	<input type="text"/>	school days
Attendance this year (to be completed by school)		Attendance last year (to be completed by school)	
Date of Meeting with Parent (if applicable)			
Head Teacher's signature		Date	

Please return a copy of this form to the parent after consideration

The School will not authorise absence for:-

- Any type of shopping
- Resting after late night
- Look after brother, sister or unwell parents
- Travel to and from family events
- Routine Medical Appointments
- Visiting relative birthdays
- Minding the house
- Holiday Requests

APPENDIX 4 – Fast Track to Attendance Academy Flow Chart

The following process outlines how the Fast Track process should be followed and what meetings/letters should be used at each stage. The process may be deviated from to support the individual circumstances of each case where the Academy deems it necessary to support the needs of the child/young person.

