

TITUS SALT SCHOOL



Attendance and Punctuality



Titus Salt School Policy on Attendance and Punctuality

Mission Statement

Titus Salt School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives, Titus Salt School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents/carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Our attendance systems will be based on our and parents/carers statutory duties and best practice guidance.

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

1.0 AIMS

1. To improve the overall attendance percentage of pupils at school
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To have a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils on matters relating to attendance and punctuality.
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
8. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions to support high attendance and punctuality.
9. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.



1.1 To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that:

- We always relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- We always relate all attendance issues and procedures to statutory guidance.
- The Whole School Attendance Policy is consistently applied across the school.
- We establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality, through assemblies, form times communication and contact with parents/carers.
- We monitor progress in attendance and punctuality against national standards.

1.2 To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, teachers and governors.

In order to meet this aim we:

- Will publish the policy and procedures for all staff in the staff handbook.
- Will make clear statutory parental responsibilities in all communication with home.
- Will promote and make reference to policy and practice at parent meetings.
- Produce termly/annual individual pupil attendance reports to parents/carers.
- Produce termly attendance reports by groups for governors.
- Provide INSET training for appointed and newly promoted staff.
- Display materials at focal points - form rooms etc.
- Discuss attendance issues in Education Welfare Service/Pastoral staff evaluation meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings (e.g. attendance review meetings).
- Introduce recognition systems, including form prizes and individual recognition (in consultation with Pupil Voice).

1.3 To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

In order to meet this aim we will:

- Maintain transparent and accurate procedures for statutory registration.
- Make phone contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence.
- Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
- Respond swiftly to lateness (in respect of both pupils and parents/carers).
- Publish the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure and ensure that staff with roles and responsibilities are appropriately trained.
- Ensure Attendance Leads meet weekly with Education Welfare Service.
- Have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Welfare Service.
- Follow the Education Welfare Service's referral and recording system.



1.4 To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.

In order to meet this aim we will:

- Involve parents/carers from the earliest stage via; ParentMail, phone calls home, parent meetings, home visit and involvement of other agencies.
- Highlight attendance in; Form time, assemblies, Anti-bullying work, parents/carers evenings, parent/carer meetings, Mental Health Counselling and other welfare related meetings.
- Provide helpful information on attendance in the pupil planner.
- Provide accurate and up to date contact information for parents/carers.
- Provide accessible and helpful information on the school website.

1.5 To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that:

- The recording of: authorised/unauthorised absence, educational activity presence is standardised and in line with DfE guidance.
- We provide Governors, pastoral staff and other school staff, parent and pupils (individuals or groups) and Education Welfare Service with accurate and appropriate attendance data.
- We identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness to enable our school to put in place strategies to reduce barriers to attendance on both an individual and group basis.

1.6 To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that we:

- Initiate first day absence contact promptly.
- Make full use of computer generated letters.
- Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents/carers.
- Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).
- Encourage all parents/carers in to school by arranging parent/carer meetings to ensure we work in partnership with each other to improve their child/ward's attendance.



1.7 To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that we:

- Are sensitive to the individual need and circumstances of returning pupils.
- Involve parents/carers throughout.
- Involve/inform all staff in the reintegration process.
- Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.
- Consider peer support and mentoring.
- Agree timescale for reviews of Attendance Plans.
- As required, include Education Welfare Workers, parents/carers and pupils in the development of individual Attendance Plans.

1.8 To implement a system of rewards and sanctions

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that we:

- Identify finance for a system of recognition for high and improved attendance.
- Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions in form time, assemblies and in communication with home.
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation.
- Involve pupil voice in system suggestions and evaluation.

1.9 To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies

In order to meet this aim we will ensure that we:

- Identify designated key staff for liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies.
- Give priority to timetabled meetings with Education Welfare Service.
- Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- Gather and record relevant information to assist completion of Education Welfare Service referrals and casework.
- Hold half termly attendance review meetings with key school staff and Education Welfare Service.
- Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
- Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. Safer School Partnership Officer, Youth Service.
- Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.



2.0 Why is good attendance and punctuality important?

There is a strong link between attendance and achievement. Research from the DfE has shown that pupils with above 95% attendance are significantly more likely to obtain five or more good GCSEs including English and Mathematics, or the equivalent, at the end of Year 11. Employers are also keen to know if school leavers are reliable and punctual attenders. Regular attendance helps pupils' learning and develops good work habits. It also helps build stable relationships with staff and fellow pupils.

3.0 SIMS

Attendance and punctuality are monitored via the SIMS electronic registration system. Legal registers are taken during form time (08:50-09:05) and at the start of the afternoon session (period 4). These registers are **legally binding** documents under the:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

Registers are also taken at the beginning of each lesson throughout the day. This provides an accurate picture of attendance and punctuality. The collected data is used in a variety of ways:

- To provide whole school attendance figures for the Department for Education and Local Authority.
- To provide year group and class data which can be used to reward and acknowledge good attendance and punctuality.
- To provide individual records which help us identify and reward good attendance and punctuality or intervene to improve low attendance and poor punctuality.
- To inform of any truancy from school or lessons.
- To show any patterns of poor attendance or lateness so that action is taken to address these issues.
- To allow for detailed analysis of attendance and punctuality by groups of pupils. This analysis includes but is not exclusive to gender, disadvantaged, SEN, ethnicity.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a part to play in monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality. The Pastoral Teams, along with the Attendance Team, take a significant role in monitoring and supporting attendance and punctuality.

The Attendance Officer sends out daily emails to the Pastoral Teams and the Attendance Manager notifying of any pupils absent that day with reasons yet to be



provided. All unexplained absences are followed up by the Attendance Manager and the Pastoral Teams.

The Attendance Manager and Attendance Officer supervise attendance in all year groups (Years 7-11), line managed by the identified member of the school Senior Leadership Team. The Attendance Manager works alongside Year Leaders and Assistant Year Leaders to identify target groups of pupils whose attendance needs monitoring. They organise attendance rewards and run daily detentions for pupils who are late to school, late to lessons and who truant. The Attendance Officer sends out daily notifications to parents/carers of any pupils who arrive late to school without authorisation.

Form Tutors follow up any unexplained absences on a weekly basis through the pupil planner. If any unexplained absences remain they are followed up with phone calls to parents/carers by the admin team. Notes from parents/carers are required for all absences.

Form Tutors receive a full register report of their form members' attendance and punctuality on a weekly basis. Form Tutors are required to give a reason for absence, record any absence notes they have received and return the amended copies to the Attendance Officer who then amends pupil records in SIMS.

All pupils whose attendance falls below 96% are monitored to identify patterns in attendance and to allow for individual casework. Persistent absentees, those pupils whose attendance is below 90%, are monitored on a daily basis.

The Attendance Manager meets weekly with the Pastoral Teams for each year group (Years 7-11) and provides reports to support these meetings, identifying pupils' attendance percentages and their most recent attendance marks. During these meetings the Attendance Manager/Pastoral Teams discuss each pupil who has an attendance percentage lower than the school target of 96%. There are a range of interventions which may be utilised, such as:

- sending an attendance concern letter to parents/carers
- meeting with a pupil to set an attendance action plan
- a home visit by the Attendance Manager
- meeting with parents/carers in school
- referral to the Education Social Worker Service (ESW) for more concerning attendance issues.

Records of interventions are accessible to all pastoral staff and records of home visits or meetings are linked to pupil records on SIMS. Letters of concern for attendance are generated manually through the SIMS system. There are **two** levels of letter:

- initial concern and notification of meeting in school with the pupil (letter 1)
- request for parent meeting following further decline or lack of improvement in attendance (letter 2)



Subject Leaders also play a role in identifying and addressing records of poor attendance and punctuality in their subjects. Post-16 attendance and punctuality is monitored rigorously by Form Tutors and the Post-16 Leadership Team. Persistent absence can lead to the loss of place in post-16.

5.0 Registration procedures

Staff are required to take their register within the first 15 minutes of a lesson so attendance data can be checked before our school communication system contacts parents/carers. The Attendance Officer sends out reminder emails if any registers have not been taken.

Where staff cannot access SIMS, they are required to fill in a paper register manually and send it to Pupil Services; the member of staff must only use this method when there is no access to SIMS. Class registers **must always** be taken, as this data is used to inform parents/carers of any pupils absent from school.

The Attendance Manager makes contact with parents/carers, conducts home visits and takes referrals from Year Teams and the Attendance Officer to undertake individual casework for pupils whose attendance is causing concern. The Attendance Manager also works alongside the Education Social Worker (ESW) to organise attendance monitoring initiatives.

For any pupils attending off-site educational programmes, the staff member with responsibility for Alternative Programmes informs the Attendance Officer of any pupils not in attendance. Each provider makes initial contact with home and then informs the school by 10:30am. Any unexplained absence is then followed up by the HLTA – Alternative Provision.

6.0 Absence

The school has a dedicated attendance telephone line, an email address and ParentMail for notification of absence. Parents/carers are required to give reasons for absence on the first day of absence. An automated communication system operates after closure of registers on the morning of each day for any pupil absent without an explanation. This system contacts parents/carers to inform or find out why a pupil is absent.

The decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised rests with school, not parents/carers. Authorised reasons for absence include illness, medical/dental appointments, educational visits, work experience, religious observance, approved sporting activity, attending an interview, being educated off-site and other exceptional circumstances. An absence is unauthorised if no reason for absence has been provided, if a pupil has truanted, if an unsatisfactory reason for absence has been provided or if a request for absence has not been approved.



7.0 Holidays in Term Time

The school **does not** authorise holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; authorisation is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Parents/carers must apply in writing to the school and will be advised by letter of the decision. Where a holiday is taken without permission the school retains the right to refer this to the local authority for a penalty notice to be issued. Penalty notices are issued per parent, per child. For example; for two parents/carers with two children a total of four penalty notices would be issued.

Each notice requires payment of £60, if paid within 21 days. If not paid within 21 days the payment doubles to £120. There is then a further seven days to pay. If the notice remains unpaid the local authority will commence prosecution proceedings under Sections 46-53 of the Education Act 2002 (previously - Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996).

8.0 Lunchtime

Pupils in Years 7-10 stay on site during the lunch period. Pupils in Year 11 may go off-site at the discretion of their Year Leader or Assistant Year Leader.

9.0 Truancy

Truancy is identified in a number of ways. SIMS registers absence from individual sessions and lessons. Absence from school may be without the knowledge of parents/carers or false information may have been provided on the attendance line. Parental condoned absence is also classed as truancy. When truancy is identified, the pupil is counselled and is subject to sanctions identified in the whole school behaviour policy. Parents are always contacted when truancy is identified.

10.0 Rewards

Attendance prize draws are run for pupils with over 96% attendance in any half term. In addition, rewards such as gift vouchers are available. Form groups are encouraged by inter-class competition to achieve the highest/most improved attendance in their year group. Attendance displays are updated weekly with the best forms for attendance in each year group.

11.0 Reviewing Attendance and Punctuality

The school reviews all areas of organisation that relate to attendance and punctuality. This review monitors the effectiveness of the school's organisation as it relates to:

- leadership and management
- everyday policies; rewards, sanctions and the promotion of high attendance and good punctuality
- dealing with consistently poor attendance and punctuality
- pupil support systems



- curriculum
- behaviour
- links with partners and other agencies.

The review identifies areas of success and improvement so that these can be publicised and recognised by everyone. Analysis of the review leads to an action plan that addresses areas for further development and feeds into the School Action Plan.

12.0 Related policies, guidance and legislation:

- School Behaviour Policy
- School Equality of Opportunity Policy
- School attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police July 2015
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999
- The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Other government departmental guidance:

- Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour
- Children missing education
- Keeping children safe in education (Sept 2019)

12.0 Policy and Review

This policy has been developed in line with DfE Guidance (*School attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019*). It will be reviewed annually. The effectiveness of the policy is monitored by members of the Senior Leadership Team who take responsibility for co-ordinating its implementation. A termly analysis of attendance, with specific reference to disadvantaged pupils, is monitored by the school's Behaviour and Attitudes Committee.

Attendance Strategy

