

# **Tadworth Primary School**



## **Attendance Policy**

**Autumn 2020**

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#### Commitment to Attendance

The staff of Tadworth Primary School are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, children, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community.

Regular attendance is key to achieving this. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage parents/carers to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

#### Expectations

We expect that all children will:

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their child's school attendance
- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- endeavour to ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- endeavour to ensure that they contact the school before 9.30am in the event of absence, on each day the child is absent or, if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details

We expect that school staff will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere
- provide a safe learning environment
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent's/carer's concerns
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual pupil's attendance and punctuality
- contact parents/carers when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received by 9.30am, to explain the absence. If the information is not received by this time, **absences will be recorded as unauthorised.**
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested

- regularly inform parents/carers of the % attendance of all pupils (parent/carer evenings, end of year reports etc.)
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer (IO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Service. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Inclusion Service may result in further actions, eg a Penalty Notice, parent/carer prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order
- notify the Local Authority (LA) after 15 days' sickness
- notify the IO after 10 days unexplained absence

### Children Leaving During the School Day

- Children are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school. Whenever possible, parent/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time
- Parent/carers are requested to confirm in writing the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving and the expected return time
- Children must be signed out at the Front Reception desk on leaving the school and signed back in on their return
- If a child leaves the school site without permission their parent/carers will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the child as a missing person

### Punctuality /Lateness

It is crucial that children arrive at school on time for registration at the beginning of the day. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other children in the class. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time.

- Children who arrive after 9am\* will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.30am and after this, lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence (this could lead to prosecution by the local authority if the problem persists).
- Persistent lateness by a pupil may be dealt with through the home/school link worker and may be referred to the Inclusion Service.

*During the COVID pandemic, we have the following revised timings in place for the school day:*

Group	Arrival time	Pick up/end time
Years 4, 5 and 6	8.40-8.50am	3.20pm
Reception, Year 1, 2 and 3	8.55-9.05am	3.05-3.15pm
Further information on the drop off and pick up arrangements can be found in the following document: Parents with children in both age groups should arrive between 8.50 – 8.55am. <b>Guidance for Parents – Tadworth Primary School's approach to minimising risks associated with COVID-19</b>		
* Children who arrive after 9.05am will be recorded as late to school.		

### Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Tadworth Primary School in writing as soon as possible. A child will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the child will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The child's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Tracking Officer and the Inclusion Service.

### **Leave of Absence**

**The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.**

- The school holiday dates, INSET days and SATs dates are published with sufficient notice.
- Only in exceptional circumstances will leave of absence in term time be authorised.
- Where leave of absence in term time is unavoidable, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given as to whether the absence will be authorised or not.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the Inclusion Service may be notified.

### **Penalty Notices:**

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

### **Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued:**

- Pupils identified by police and the Inclusion Service officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
- Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent/carer** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parent/carers had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

- The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 95% over the current academic year. The parent/carers' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or the Inclusion Service will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

### **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

If concerns regarding attendance arise, the Welfare Secretary will notify the classteacher who will, in the first instance, talk to the parent/carer. Should no improvement be seen/the concerns remain, a letter will be issued to the parent/carer. Any parent/carers whose children are identified as a cause for concern may be invited to attend an attendance panel at school, held in conjunction with the IO. Following this, if there is no improvement in school attendance, Tadworth Primary School will refer the family to the IO who will work in partnership with school and parent/carers in support of pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis.

The Inclusion Service may also issue a Penalty Notice to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or The Inclusion Service Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents/carers will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

#### *Linked documents:*

#### *Application for Leave of Absence*

Policy introduced	Spring 2013
Review Date	Autumn 2020
Next review due	Autumn 2022

## Addendum

Please follow the link below for the Government Addendum on recording attendance in relation to Coronavirus (COVID 19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>