



Attendance Policy and Procedure

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Introduction

This policy is written with due regard of the DfE guidance:

- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(DfE 2024\)](#) and the accompanying [Summary Table of Responsibilities](#).
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- Paragraph 15 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- [Children Missing Education \(2024\)](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#) (DfE, February 2023)
- [Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#) (DfE, February 2023)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) (DfE, August 2017)

Going to school regularly is important to your child's future. Children who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. The school consistently promotes the benefits of good attendance, sets high expectations for every pupil and communicates those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents. The school's Senior Leadership Team systematically analyses its attendance data to identify patterns and target improvement. Where appropriate, the school, works effectively, with local agencies and partners to overcome barriers to attendance.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and it is important to set such good habits from the outset. Good attendance shows potential employers that your child is reliable. Research suggests that children who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.

The school's Attendance Champion is Neill Lunnon (Head and DDSL).

The school's objectives to ensure high attendance

To maintain a whole-school culture which promotes the benefits of high attendance, the school sets out to:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

The Law

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, 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.

Once your son is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your son fails to do so, you risk enforcement action initiated by the Local Authority.

The Admissions and Attendance Register

All pupils at Tower House are placed on the Admissions Register and have their attendance recorded in the Attendance Register.

The Admissions Register at Tower House is held by the Head of School Administration.

The Admissions Register will include the following details for each pupil:

- Full name
- Preferred name (to be used at school)
- Sex
- Address
- Full name and address of each of the pupil's parents known to the school
- If not living together, details of which parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number for each parent to be used in the case of an emergency
- Day, month and year of the pupil's birth
- Day, month and year of the pupil's starting day at the school
- Name and address of the last school the pupil attended, if any

The school will notify the local authority within five days of adding any pupils name to the admissions register where that pupil is added to the register at non-standard entry points.

When the parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, the school will record in the Admissions Register:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live.
- The new address.
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

A pupil's name must only be deleted from the Admissions Register if one of certain prescribed grounds are met. These are set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024), paragraphs 222 to 281.

If a child leaves the school at a non-standard departure point and the parent/carer has notified the school in writing of their departure to another school, Tower House will record in the Register:

- The name of the other school.
- The date when the pupil first attended or planned to first attend that school.

A non-standard entry point is any year group other than Reception.

A non-standard departure point is at any time other than the end of Year 8.

The Head of School Administration will notify the local authority when the pupil is taken off the school roll. The school, will also seek direct contact with the new school to confirm the pupil is now registered there. If the parents do not disclose the destination school, the school will report the circumstances, as soon as possible, to the local authority.

If any pupil with a social worker is to be removed from the Admissions Register, the school will notify the social worker as soon as possible.

Registration

- The school gates are opened at 8.10am.
- After 8.30am, entry to the school is via Reception.
- Registers are open at 8.40am and close at 8.55am. Pupils who arrive at school after the register has been taken, but before it is closed, will be recorded as 'L' - late on the register.
- Pupils who arrive at school after registers close at 8.55am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as 'U' - unauthorised late which then impacts on their overall attendance level.
- Pupils must sign in and out if they arrive or leave school outside of the normal times in the School Office.

It is a legal requirement that a register of attendance is taken during the morning and afternoon at school. Any unexplained absence must be coded as unauthorised until a reason is given by parents/carers. This must be no later than 5 days after the session. Only the Headteacher may authorise or unauthorise an absence. The register can only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken, and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry.

Where amendments are made, the register will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. Registers are kept for six years as a record.

Every session (AM/PM) is registered through the school internal system - ISAMS. Teachers are expected to ensure that the register is taken as promptly as possible.

Lateness

When pupils arrive late at school, they disrupt routines, affect other pupils' learning, miss the teacher's instructions to the lesson and may also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late. They may also miss important intervention programmes and the opportunity to practice key learning skills. Where pupils show a persistent pattern of lateness, parents/carers will receive contact from the school advising

them of the concern and offering support to resolve the issue. Should the lateness continue, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their child's lateness.

If there is no improvement, despite the school's attempts to address unauthorised absences, a referral could be made to the Local Authority.

Reporting a pupil absence

Parents/carers must contact school on the first and every subsequent day of absence by 8.45am.

For any pupil not present at the close of registration, if the reason is still unknown, a member of staff will contact the Parent/carers once the registers have closed at 8.55am.

The member of staff will ring every contact, starting with the priority contact, until a reason for absence is known. Messages will be left on voicemail requesting parents/carers contact school regarding their pupil's absence. Outcomes of any phone conversations will be logged on the pupil's electronic school record – ISAMS. Staff will complete the registers in accordance with the correct use of registration codes.

Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence if there is no response from a parent/carer to an enquiry regarding their pupil's absence from school.

For absences relating to a medical appointment, supporting information may be requested to authorise this absence. This can be an email which clearly identifies who the appointment is for, or an appointment card. A period of absence will only be authorised in relation to the length of the appointment.

Absence

Authorised Absence

If your son is ill or unable to attend school for any reason, you should contact the school by phone or email to notify them on the first, and each subsequent day of absence. Depending on the reasons for absence, the Head will decide whether the absence can be authorised or not. Where absence is sickness related, the school may require medical certification, particularly where the absence lasts a few days.

The responsibility of authorising absence lies with the school.

The school will normally authorise absence for the following reasons:

- **Illness:** Where the school accepts that a pupil is ill, absence will be authorised. The school can and will at times request parents to provide medical evidence to support absence for illness.
- **Appointments:** The school will usually grant dental and medical appointments as authorised absences. Where possible such appointments should be made outside of school hours and patterned absence for these reasons may be challenged.
- **Religious observance:** Tower House is proud of its cultural diversity and, although holy days are taken into consideration in the setting of term dates, we recognise that different faiths have days of observance that fall within term time. In balancing this with the academic welfare of pupils, parents are encouraged to consider ways of observing faith holidays that do not affect school attendance. Each request for absence on the grounds of faith will be considered on a case-by-case basis and should be submitted to the Head using the usual Request for Absence form.

- **Exceptional circumstances/unavoidable causes:** Authorised absence can be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement. The appropriate member of staff, such as Form Teacher or Head of Year should be contacted and request for absence submitted in the normal way.

Absence in exceptional circumstances does not ordinarily include the following: birthdays, holidays, days out and family celebrations.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence from school is likely to be recorded as unauthorised absence when:

- there is no parental explanation.
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation for an absence.

Heads are no longer permitted to agree a Leave of Absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. This includes where parents decide to take their children out of school for a family holiday during term time. If parents intend to take their child out of school for a leave of absence (other than a family holiday) during term time, this must be requested in advance and the request agreed by the Head.

Repeated Absence

Schools must regularly inform the Local Authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or where absence escalates. Schools also have a safeguarding duty, under section 175 Education Act 2002, to investigate absences.

Monitoring Absence

The Head of School Administration produces school attendance data on a half termly basis and sends to the Attendance Champion. This information is reviewed with the SLT at their weekly SLT meeting and in the weekly Safeguarding meeting with the DSL and DDSL. The Head of School Administration also informs the Attendance Champion each week if a pupil has been away from school for three or more days in one week.

The Attendance Champion reports termly to Governors via the Safeguarding Report.

Support from School

The school is the first place to go to discuss any attendance problems. If your son shows reluctance to attend school, it may indicate an underlying issue. Discuss this with your son in the first instance then approach his teacher.

The school will agree a plan with you to improve your child's attendance. If you don't follow the plan and things don't improve, the school will take further action.

Working with External Partners

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who will be removed from the Admissions Register. In any case where a pupil of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the Register when the next school is not known, the school will report the circumstances, as soon as possible, to the local authority.

The school is required to work with the LEA to agree an approach for severely absence pupils. The school has agreed to inform the LEA if, for any pupil, unauthorised absence exceeds 5% of their total attendance over a sustained period.

The school will contact the local authority if any single absence raises safeguarding concerns, including if a pupil has ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence in a given period.

If any pupil with a social worker has issues with persistent absence, the school will notify the social worker as soon as possible and will regularly update the social worker about ongoing attendance.

Children who are absent from or Missing Education

The DfE guidance 'Children Missing Education' (2024) defines a child missing in education as a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education otherwise. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), expands the consideration to children who are absent from education. Children who are absent from or missing education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions are at significant risk of underachieving. This can also be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

The guidance sets out the school's obligations to identify and report children who are missing in education. The school must report to its local authority all pupils of compulsory school age who are added to the admissions register and all pupils who are removed from the register, if they always leave the school other than at standard transition points (i.e. except the end of the final year of education normally provided by the school). Where a pupil lives in a local authority which is different from the location of the school, the school's reporting responsibility is to the local authority in which the school is situated. In accordance with its safeguarding duties, as set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the school recognises children missing in education as a potential safeguarding issue and follows its safeguarding procedures, as set out in its safeguarding policy.

The school has a duty to make reasonable enquiries as to the whereabouts of a child who is missing, in conjunction with its local authority, and cannot remove a missing child from its admissions register until it has agreed with the local authority that all reasonable endeavours to locate the child have been exhausted.

Please also refer to the school's Whole School Missing Child Policy (including a Child Missing Education).

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and, therefore, the school's attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as for any other pupil. Working with their parents to improve attendance, the school is mindful of the barriers these pupils face and puts additional support in place, where necessary, to help them access their full-time education. This may include:

- Having sensible conversations, providing support and making reasonable adjustments.
- Working with parents and families to develop specific routines and approaches to attendance.

- Ensuring strategies to remove any in-school barriers to attendance, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensuring good pastoral care is provided to support those with anxiety about attendance.
- Ensuring that data is regularly monitored by the school's Senior Leadership Team.

School Attendance/Absence Codes

Code	Description	Meaning
I	Present (AM)	Present
V	Present (PM)	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence due to a part-time timetable	Authorised Absence
E	Pupil is excluded with no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT a medical appointment)	Authorised Absence
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised Absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
J1	Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Educational Activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
V	Approved educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity
W	Approved work experience	Approved Educational Activity
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved Educational Activity
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/ description	Unauthorised Absence
U	Pupil arrived after registers closed	Unauthorised Absence

Tower House School is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Approved and Signed by Chair of Governors

Name: Antony Phillips

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Antony Phillips', written over the printed name.

Date: 24th September 2025
